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KOBO-DAISHI AND SHINGON BUDDHISM

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The recent development of the History of Religion makes us more sensitive to hitherto neglected dimensions of religion. Thanks to the work of scholars in this field, we have become acquainted with a wide range of expressions of the religious experience of mankind. This endeavor must continue.[1] History of Religion cannot mean a mere accumulation of data in terms of doctrinal, cultic, and sociological expressions; there must be interpretation. Moreover, religion should never be studied in isolation; it forms a part of society, culture, and history, touching all aspects of human life, individual and collective. Many important works have dealt with the political, social, and cultural implications of religion, but our task cannot stop with their examination.

A student of the History of Religion has to develop a "perspective" which enables him to do justice both to the nature of religious experience itself and to the dynamic relationship in which religion stands to other phenomena. To be sure, such a "perspective" can only gradually emerge; one is bound to start with a working hypothesis to be modified in the course of the inquiry. We owe much to those forerunners in the field who warned us not to

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[1]L. H. Jordan, Comparative Religion: Its Genesis and Growth (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1905).

interpret religion exclusively or even primarily as a product of cultural and social forces and tendencies.[1] While religion reflects the social and cultural environment in which it exists, it penetrates all aspects of society, just as religion can be said to mirror an historical epoch, yet at the same time religion conditions it. Therefore, we must guard against one-sidedness and study religion integrally and dynamically.

One of the tasks of the student of the History of Religion is directed towards "establishing what has actually happened."[2] Therefore, he has to be sensitive not only to the similarities of various expressions of religion in scattered geographical areas and different historical epochs but also to the uniqueness of what happens to one religion or religions. For instance, an observer may find affinity between Islam in Egypt and China, but as he observes more carefully he finds great differences between them despite some similarities.[3] One of the most useful tools in the discipline of the History of Religion--the "typological method"--has been greatly refined recently by two scholars.[4] They have shown us a wide range of phenomenological and psychological types of religious experience, which help us to deal with new data typologically.

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[1]Joachim Wach, Sociology of Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), pp. 9-12.

[2]G. Van Der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestations, trans. J. E. Turner (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1938), p. 686.

[3]E. R. Hughes and K. Hughes, Religion in China (London: Hutchinson House, 1950), pp. 98-109.

[4]Joachim Wach and G. Van Der Leeuw.

Many scholars in the field have been interested in the process through which an historical religion or religions penetrate a new area. What takes place when the impact of an alien religion is felt in a given situation? Several theories have been advanced to explain this process: evangelization, conversion, radical displacement, synthesis, and reconception.[1] What actually happens in such a stituation is complex, and the process of interaction of religion and culture, religion and other religions, must be investigated. There are also degrees of conversion, radical displacement, and synthesis. The matter becomes even more complex when several historical religions are involved in this process of interaction.

An example is found in the introduction of Buddhism into China where there already were Confucianism and Taoism. Certainly both Confucianism and Taoism were deeply affected by the new religious system and vice versa. For instance, Buddhism had to utilize Chinese words such as tao and t'ien which had been deeply influenced by Confucianism and Taoism. When Buddhism adopted these words to express its own theological and philosophical doctrines, these words were not free from residual meanings carried over from Confucianism and Taoism. In the course of time, each of the three systems thrown together found certain affinities in the others--in doctrine, cult, or sociological grouping--and each was influenced by the other two. In this process, one also observes various types of conflict.

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[1] W. E. Hocking, Living Religions and a World Faith (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1940), pp. 143-208.

Such is the complexity of the phenomena of the history of religions. Sometimes a new faith is swallowed by an indigenous religion or religions as in the case of the Nestorian Church in China, and often a new faith overcomes the indigenous religions as Christianity did in Europe. These cases are cited at the risk of oversimplification to indicate two types of results. In either case, what usually happens is that the dominating religion incorporates much of the ethos of the others into its system, though the extent to which this occurs varies according to the situation. However, there is another type or pattern of development which occurs when several religious systems meet--namely, the pattern of coexistence. It may be argued that to some extent this happens rather frequently. For instance, in Mexico indigenous religious belief and practice persisted within the context of Roman Catholicism. But what is meant by the "pattern of coexistence" is a more conscious amalgamation of more than one religion among the same group of people. In order to achieve such a pattern some form of mutual adjustment has to be made, since any religious system requires exclusiveness as well as inclusiveness. The historian of religion must investigate what happens to each of these coexisting religions and to the culture in which they coexist.

A case-study of coexisting religious systems will help the historian of religion to understand the complex interaction of culture and the religions involved. Under what conditions did the pattern of coexistence of religions occur, and what types of religions adjusted to each other in such a way as to develop this pattern? Finally, what type of world-view was implicit in the

culture in which the pattern developed, and how did this world-view change in the course of this development?

The religious history in Japan prior to the ninth century provides a case-study of the development of such a pattern. During this time, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism were successively introduced to the Japanese Islands. The complex interaction of these religions with the native Shinto and with each other led to mutual adjustment and later to systematization under the leadership of Kobo-daishi.

The present study deals primarily with the life and theological system of Kukai (774-835), generally referred to by his posthumous name Kobo-daishi, who was the founder of the Shingon-shu (Mantra School of Mahayana Buddhism in Japan). The history of religion in Japan is commonly divided into the following six periods: (1) The gradual development of Shinto in the early period--roughly from the beginning of the Christian era to the early fourth century. (2) The introduction of Chinese civilization--from the fifth to the eighth century. (3) The Heian period--from the ninth to the twelfth century. (4) The period of feudal strife--from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. (5) The Tokugawa period--from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. (6) The modern period--from the nineteenth century to the present.[1] This thesis will be confined to the first three periods.

During the first three periods we find a gradual development of the Shinto cult which was indigenous to Japan; then the introduction of Confucianism and Taoism, both developed in China

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[1]Masaharu Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1930), pp. 11-15.

and transplanted to Japan; last of all, the penetration of Buddhism, which originated in India and was introduced to Japan through Korea and China. Some scholars suspect that Nestorian Christianity was also introduced to Japan during the second period, but so far no conclusive evidence has been advanced on this subject. At any rate, the religious history of Japan is characterized by an influx of alien religious schools and by a residue of the prehistoric world-view underlying the native religion. These religious systems, after a complicated process of mutual intercourse, developed into a syncretistic religious faith during the Heian period.[1]

In studying the history of religion of any cultural group, it is essential to investigate the underlying world-view and its development. That is to say, our most fruitful approach is to look at religion, insofar as we possibly can, from the inside. For instance, in studying the history of religion in China we must appropriate to ourselves the Chinese point of view. Creel reminds us that the Chinese word hsing is often translated "elements"--wood, fire, metal, water, and earth. But hsing is a Chinese version of "elements," and it can also be translated as road, conduct, behavior, action, walk, move, perform, and do. In other words, the term hsing can be understood only when it is related to the Chinese world-view.[2] It is said that the early Chinese world-view was concerned with harmony and order, in which social and cosmic regularity were combined in a single complex. But the

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[1]Teisei Keishitsu, Nihon Bukkyo-shi Gaisetsu (Tokyo: Risosha, 1940).

[2]Herrlee Glessner Creel, Sinism (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1929), p. 2.

pressure of curiosity and the necessity of controlling the environment led to further analysis of this simple whole. This analysis, probably never made consciously, resulted in the view that all things originated from the interaction of yang and yin. In this world-view, man was a natural part of the universe; his actions were believed to affect all the universe, and all the universe was believed to affect him. Having thus reconstructed the very general character of the ancient Chinese world-view, we are able to place particular religious thoughts in relation to the main stream of Chinese thought. This approach is applicable to any other religious or cultural group.

One of the chief motivations which led the writer to the study of Kobo-daishi and Shingon Buddhism was an attempt to articulate his concept of the ancient Japanese world-view. His assumption is that early Shinto reflected a world-view which was uniquely "Japanese" and which was different from that of the ancient Hindu[1] and Chinese. Articulation of the early Japanese world-view has been neglected thus far. There are many reasons for this. First, the Japanese government until after World War II discouraged any critical inquiry in the area of early Japanese history; this has been particularly the case since the early 1930s when thought-control was tightened. Second, all the early materials were written after the introduction of Chinese culture; source materials prior to that period are scarce. Third, there was no intellectual leadership among Shintoists between the ninth and seventeenth centuries. Though the revival of Shinto scholarship was attempted

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[1]Betty Heimann, Indian and Western Philosophy. A Study in Contrasts (London: Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1937).

several times, it was not successful until Kamo Mabuchi (1697-1769), Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), and Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843) organized a systematic study of Shinto. Therefore, the ethos of Japanese religion and culture is usually sought in Bushido (knighthood),[1] Zen Buddhism,[2] Yamato-damashii (spirit of Japan),[3] cultic practice of Shinto,[4] or Japanese folklore.[5] Undoubtedly, such studies will aid in the reconstruction of the early Japanese world-view, but the writer is of the opinion that it is equally important to start with a hypothetical world-view and examine religious developments from this perspective.

Briefly stated, the world-view of the ancient Japanese may be characterized as a preoccupation with the aesthetic "total experience" of the cosmic wholeness in the writer's opinion. With this hypothesis, the present study attempts to examine the religious background of Japan before the time of Kobo-daishi, the social and historical factors which made it possible to develop a pattern of syncretistic amalgamation, and the theological and

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[1] Inazo Nitobe, Bushido, the Soul of Japan (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905).

[2] D. T. Suzuki, "Zen and the Japanese Love of Nature," The Eastern Buddhist, VII (1936), 65.

[3] G. H. Moule, The Spirit of Japan (London: Young People's Missionary Movement, 1913); Tasuku Harada, The Faith of Japan (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914).

[4] W. T. Mason, The Meaning of Shinto (New York: E. P. Dutton Co., 1935); Arthur Morgan Young, The Rise of a Pagan State (New York: William Morrow Co., 1939); John M. Maki, Japanese Militarism (New York: Alfred A. Knof, 1945); D. C. Holtom, Modern Japan and Shinto Nationalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1943).

[5] Taro Wakamori, Nihon-minzokugaku-gaisetsu (Tokyo: Tokai Shobo, 1947).

practical tenets of the Shingon school in the early Heian period. It is not possible to intensively analyze all aspects of religious developments in Japan during this period, and much additional research is necessary before any definitive conclusions about the ancient Japanese world-view can be drawn.

In dealing with the life and teaching of Kobo-daishi and the doctrinal development of the Shingon school, several approaches are conceivable. One commendable approach might be to begin with an examination of original Buddhism, the rise of Mahayana Buddhism, the development of the Mantra school (or Vajrayana) in India and China, and then to proceed to evaluate the development of the Shingon school in Japan. Th. Stcherbatsky, among other competent scholars, followed this approach. However, his untimely death did not permit the completion of the section dealing with the Shingon school.[1] Another important approach might be to compare the main tenets of the Shingon school with those of other schools of Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism. An exhaustive investigation of the doctrine, cult, and sociological aspects of the Shingon school is yet to come. Needless to say, a biographical study of Kobo-daishi should not be neglected.[2] Moreover, the social, political, and cultural implications of the Shingon school and Kobo-daishi should also be investigated.

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[1] Th. Stcherbatsky, The Central Concept of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word "Dharma" (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1932); Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana (Leningrad: Publishing Office of the Academy of Science of the USSR, 1927); Stcherbatsky, Buddhist Logic (2 vols.; Leningrad: Publishing Office of the Academy of Science of the USSR, 1932).

[2] Ryujo Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo (Tokyo: Daito Shuppan-sha, 1934).

In this thesis the outline below will be followed:

Chapter I.	Introduction.
Chapter II.	Religious developments in Japan before the Nara period.
Chapter III.	Buddhism in the Nara period.
Chapter IV.	Background and life of Kobo-daishi.
Chapter V.	Development of the Singon school.

There has been very little work directly related to this area. However, the complete written works of Kobo-daishi have been preserved, though the authenticity of each one must be tested. Most of the modern publications on Shingon Buddhism are in the Japanese language, except for R. Tajima's Etude sur le Mahavairocana-sutra. Even in the Japanese language, publication on the Shingon doctrine is limited: K. Tomita, Himitsu Jirin (Dictionary of Esoteric Buddhism); S. Omura, Mikkyo Hattatsushi (Development of Esoteric Buddhism); B. Matsumoto, Shingon Mikkyo no okoru made (Historical Development of the Shingon Esoterism); R. Kambayashi, Mikkyogaku (Study of Esoterism); S. Kichijo et al., Mikkyo Daijiten (Grand Dictionary of Esoterism). All these writers are more interested in the apologetic aspect than in critical inquiry.

As a general background for Buddhist esoterism, though not referring to Shingon Buddhism particularly, Benoytosh Bhattacharyya's An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism should be mentioned. A number of iconographic studies by competent scholars, including Alice Getty, B. Bhattacharyya, Ludwig Bachhofer, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Alfred C. A. Foucher, M. Anesaki, aid in an understanding of Buddhist esoterism.

Buddhism in general and Mahayana Buddhism in particular have been studied by numerous scholars both Western and Eastern. Yet, works which attempt to interpret Shingon (Mantra) Buddhism

are scarce. Many scholars complain that Shingon Buddhism does not disclose its "mystery" to the uninitiated, and even Shingon scholars do not discuss their doctrine beyond a certain point. To date, the best insight has been expressed by Ryujo Kambayashi among Japanese scholars, and E. Steinilber-Oberlin among the Western scholars.

Studies of early Shinto have not by any means been exhaustive. Pioneers in this field are J. W. T. Mason, W. G. Aston, D. C. Holtom, and A. C. Underwood among Western scholars, and Genchi Kato, Sokyo Ono, and K. Yanagita among the native scholars.

Among works on the early period of Japanese history, we cite G. B. Sansom, Robert K. Reischauer, and F. Brinkley among Western scholars, and K. Aruga, T. Keishitsu, T. Muraoka, N. Nishida, Y. Takekoshi, K. Kuroita, and S. Miura among Japanese.

The writer has talked to many Shingon priests and laymen; he has visited Shingon temples and participated in some of their services in Japan. But no one has clearly interpreted the mystery of the Shingon. For the most part, Japanese books have been used in order to present the Shingon school's interpretation of its own faith. All the major works in Western languages in this field have been used in this study and are found in the bibliography. Iconographic study, which is an important aspect of Shingon Buddhism, is not dealt with in this study.

It should be noted that Shingon Buddhism, among all the Mahayana Buddhist schools in Japan, is the most neglected by scholars both in Japan and in the West. And yet, the importance of Kobo-daishi in the ninth century Japan is undeniable. It is the

conviction of the writer that the study of Kobo-daishi and Shingon Buddhism is important to the understanding of the history of religion in Japan.

The present study (1) attempts to grasp the world-view underlying the development of religions in Japan, (2) to illustrate the cultural significance of religion in the Far East, and (3) hopes to provide some insight into the relation between various forms of expression of religious experience and eventually to understand better the various aspects of religious experience itself.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT IN JAPAN BEFORE THE NARA PERIOD

Gradual Development of Shinto in the Early Period

In spite of the common belief that contemporary Shinto in Japan is essentially the same as its original form, Shinto experienced many changes before it become established in its present form. Although Shinto became more complex after the influence of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism was felt, there had been a gradual and natural development of this cult before the third century.

The term "Shinto" means many things to many people. Holtom states:

> We turn to a preliminary study of the nature of Shinto as revealed in its history. It is possible to make an introductory delimination of the subject by means of a definition. In so doing it is recognized that a definition is hardly more than an epitomized description in terms of significant features and that the sense of what is significant varies with the investigator. . . . For example: Shinto is the indigenous religion of the Japanese people; it is the Way of the Gods; it is "Kami-cult," a form of definition in which Kami signifies the deities of Japan as distinct from those brought into the country through foreign contacts; it is pan-psychism or hylozoism; it is the racial spirit of the Japanese people (Yamato Damashii); it is the sacred ceremonies conducted before the Kami; it is the essence of the principles of imperial rule; it is a system of correct social and political etiquette; it is the ideal national morality; it is a system of patriotism and loyalty centering in emperor worship ("Mikadoism"); it is, in its pure and original form, a nature worship; or, over

against this, Shinto, correctly understood, is ancestor worship; or, again, it is an intermixture of the worship of nature and of ancestors; and, lastly, it is, in its earliest stages, a lower nature religion in which are merged elements of animism, naturism, and anthropolatry, evolving later into an advanced form of nature religion, and, finally, under the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism, achieving speculative and ethical components of a high order.

We have noted a number of definitions that have been advanced by different Japanese scholars. Manifestly, they are not all reconcilable one with another, although . . . we may find a unifying point of view in a definition of Shinto as the characteristic ritualistic arrangements and their underlying beliefs by which the Japanese people have celebrated, dramatized, interpreted, and supported the chief values of their national life.[1]

The early inhabitants of Japan formulated their own explanations of their origin, their sense of awe and fear of the Sun, their attitude toward the land, volcanoes, forests, and nature in the form of myths.[2] These myths are full of imagination and exaggeration, but underneath "the ancients recognized certain intellectual problems and asked for the _why_ and _how_, the _wherefrom_ and _whereto_."[3]

Robert Karl Reischauer classifies Shinto myths into four groups based on four geographical areas: (1) the Plain of High Heaven (Takamagahara), (2) Izumo-no-kuni, (3) Kyushu, and (4) the

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[1]D. C. Holtom, _The National Faith of Japan_ (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1938), pp. 5-6. For other definitions of the term "Shinto," see Genchi Kato, _A Study of Shinto, The Religion of The Japanese Nation_ (Tokyo: The Zaidan-Hojin-Meiji-Seitoku-Kinen-Gakkai, 1926); A. C. Underwood, _Shintoism_ (London: The Epworth Press, 1934); W. G. Aston, _Shinto_ (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905); J. W. T. Mason, _op. cit_.

[2]John C. Ferguson and Masaharu Anesaki, _Chinese and Japanese Mythology_, Vol. VIII of _The Mythology of All Races_, ed. Canon John Arnott MacCulloch (13 vols.; Boston: Marshall Jones Co., 1928), pp. 209-365.

[3]H. A. Frankfort _et al._, _The Intellectual Adventure of Man_ (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1945), p. 6.

central Yamato-no-kuni region.[1]

> The central story of Japanese mythology is that concerning the entrance of the Great Sun Goddess (Amaterasu-Omikami) into the Heavenly Rock Cavern (Ama-no-iwaya), and the various sacrifices and dances of other Deities of Heaven (Amatsu-kami) had to perform to entice her forth again.
>
> . . . .
>
> This cycle of myths seems to be that of a mountain people and probably developed in its final form by some tribe that lived in Yamato-no-kuni, because of the place names mentioned in these stories and many other reasons. . . . Hence, it is believed that the myths of the Heavenly Rock Cavern (Ama-no-iwaya) episode were evolved after the earliest Japanese had left the seacoast and had lived for some time in mountainous Yamato-no-kuni.
>
> A second group of myths deals with the descents of various Deities (Kami) from the Plain of High Heaven (Takamagahara) to different points in Japan. These stories seem to show that the ancient Japanese believed the other world to be beyond the ocean; that one's birth had to take place on the seashore; and that this journey from the other world to this one was a time of great danger to the newly arriving spirit, so it had to be accompanied by friendly Deities (Kami) who protected it from evil ones. The location of these stories is generally in Kyushu, primarily in Himuka-no-kuni, later called Hyuga-no-kuni. It is argued, however, that this name, Sun-Facing Country (Himuka-no-kuni) was given that part of southern Kyushu because it does face due east. Then because the Japanese claimed descent from the Great Sun Goddess it was but natural that they should come to believe their earliest ancestors descended in the Sun-Facing Country. Many modern Japanese scholars, therefore, favor northern Kyushu opposite Korea as the probable location for whatever factual elements these early sea myths contain.
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> A third group of myths . . . treats the subject of the creation of heaven, earth, and man.
>
> . . . .
>
> A fourth cycle of myths deals with Izumo-no-kuni. These center around His Impetuous-Male-Augustness (Susanoo-no-Mikoto) and his most important descendant, the Deity Master-of-the-Great-Land (Okuninushi-no-Kami).[2]

All these myths were collected to support a main theme of Shinto, that the Sun-goddess, or the central figure of Shinto deities, sent her grandson to rule Japan. The switch from myth to

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[1]Robert Karl Reischauer, Early Japanese History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1937) Part A, p. 5.

[2]Ibid, pp. 5-7.

history has been worked out very smoothly in the Shinto system. The grandson of the Sun-goddess conquered the "gentiles" and his grandson was the first emperor, who is said to be the direct ancestor of emperors who followed him. The claim of solar ancestry of the Japanese imperial line was advocated and widely accepted by the sixth century.[1]

At any rate, the so-called "Shinto" was maintained by the leading clan, and before the third century

> . . . this religion, known by the name of Shinto, was beginning to develop more or less articulate expressions of hero and ancestor worship, with a background of nature worship . . . when the tribes and clans were gradually amalgamated under the power and prestige of a ruling family who were believed to have descended from the Sun-goddess, this goddess was revered as the supreme deity of Shinto, and her worship became the central feature of the national cult. These two aspects of the Shinto religion, communal and national, were gaining in force at the dawn of the historical age. . . .[2]

A lack of source materials makes it difficult to investigate the early features of Shinto. Our information of the earliest forms of Shinto are based on the following written sources: (1) The Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters) was compiled in A. D. 712 in order to demonstrate the divine origin of the ruling family and the remote antiquity of the foundation of the State. (2) The Nihongi or Nihonshoki (Chronicles of Japan) was compiled in 720. It was written in Chinese and covers in part the same ground as the Kojiki. (3) The Yengishiki (Institutes of the Yengi period) describes the ritual as practised in the Yengi Era (901-923) and includes some prayers (norito) which have come down from ancient

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[1]Wach, op. cit., pp. 96-97.

[2]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 11.

times. (4) The Mannyo-shu (Collection of Myriad Leaves) is a collection of poems compiled toward the end of the eighth century or at the beginning of the ninth.[1] None of these books is regarded as sacred scripture. Nevertheless, we learn some valuable information about the early forms of Shinto.

The earliest worship of the kami was not necessarily at man-made shrines. The oldest shrines known to us were simple taboo areas formed by the dedication of sacred trees and stones. The oldest festivals were connected with agriculture--for the invocation of divine protection to the growing crops, and the warding off of unfavorable influences of wind and water. Although there was no special order of priests in the early period, a natural priesthood developed in the family and communal group headship. Later, but at early and unknown dates, four priestly groups emerged: the Ritualists (Nakatomi-clan), the Abstainers (Imbe-clan), the Diviners (Urabe-clan), and the Musicians and Dancers (Sarume-clan).[2]

Reischauer calls the earliest historical period in Japan (c. 40 B.C.-A.D. 645) "the age of clans (Uji) and hereditary titles (Kabane)."[3] Ancient Japan was inhabited by many independent clans, which were the units of society. At the head of each clan was the clan chieftain who ruled under the guidance of the clan deity. Even after the rise of professional priestly orders, the clan chieftain retained his prerogative as high priest. About the clan

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[1]Underwood, op. cit., pp. 14-16.

[2]Holtom, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

[3]Reischauer, op. cit., p. 8.

chieftain were grouped the clansmen. Beneath the clan chieftain and his clansmen developed many hereditary groups of people organized into units commonly known as be. These be are often called guilds because their members were generally bound together according to occupation. At the bottom of the social order were the slaves. Among the countless independent clans in the early period, the most powerful one was the Imperial Clan (Kobetsu). Its clan chieftain in the course of time came to be accepted as the highest ruler of all clan chieftains or Tenno. The Imperial Clan established a small tribal state, which is often called the Yamato Kingdom, in the present Nara prefecture, and consolidated its position by appointing officials over the new lands it was conquering. In the third and fourth centuries the Yamato Kingdom extended its frontiers into the Kanto district on the east and Izumo district on the west as well as the Kyushu Island on the south. During this period the influence of the Yamato Kingdom reached southern Korea. With the growing complexity of government and society in general, a greater distinction was drawn between secular and sacerdotal matters. The Shinto shrines were built in the regions which came under the domination of the Yamato Kingdom.

Influence of Chinese Civilization

Although Japan had been earlier influenced by the religion and culture of China through migration and occasional intercourse, a strong impact of Chinese civilization began to be felt in Japan in the fifth century, primarily through contact with Korea.

The internal situation in the Korean peninsula with competing kingdoms--notably Silla, Paikche, and Kokuli--was conducive

to group migration of farmers, craftsmen, artisans, and scholars to the islands of Japan in search of peace and security.[1] They were welcomed by the Yamato kingdom and were soon producing wealth for the Imperial Family and its allied clans. At the same time, certain great clans closely allied with the Imperial Family, such as the Otomo, Heguri, Mononobe, and Soga clans, fattened on this concentration of power at the Yamato court and became so strong as to be dangerous rivals of the Imperial Clan itself. Emperors were often reduced to the status of puppets in the hands of the clan leaders. Thus, the internal situation in the Yamato court became more complex during this period. Increasing intrigue by the imperial concubines was reported, and the throne was constantly threatened by members of the Imperial Family and their relatives. Political stability was maintained only through the balance of power among leading clan chieftains.

The significant trend in this period was the appointment of naturalized citizens of skill and knowledge to important positions in government, industry and education. In this connection, Confusianism, as "Chinese learning," played an important role. First, Confucianism was accepted as a cultural movement which prepared the way for the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century. It must be noted that Japan had no letters of her own, and the process of adopting Chinese characters, based on monosyllabic words, to the polysyllabic Japanese language was a painful one.[2]

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 15-19.

[2]G. B. Sansom, Japan, A Short Cultural History (New York: Appleton-Century Co., 1931), pp. 64-65.

Nevertheless, this superior culture, exemplified by Confucianism, was accepted by the elite of Japanese society--namely, the clan leaders. Second, with the growth of Japanese social and political structure, Confucianism began to influence political theory. Third, Confucianism, modified and adapted to Japanese society, provided an ethical system. Anesaki states:

> Early Shinto had no clear conception of loyalty or filial piety . . . the very names for these were supplied by Confucianism, giving a systematic teaching of morality and supplying the methods of instruction.[1]

Although Confucianism was welcomed by the elite, the extent to which it was understood in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries is highly controversial. As Sansom states:

> . . . a number of Japanese students were able to spell out with a teacher's aid passages from Chinese books, without being able to compose themselves, or even to trace more than a few Chinese characters with the brush. . . . Gradually, under their foreign tutors, they gained some idea of the contents of the canonical works brought to Japan, first the Lun-yu or Confucian Analects, then the five major classics, the Odes, the Annals, the Rites, the Changes, and the Spring and Autumn Chronicles. . . .[2]

Together with Confucianism came Taoism.[3] It is extremely difficult to trace the development of Taoistic ideas and practices in Japan. The metaphysical aspect of Taoism was never widely understood, although it too penetrated poetry, literature and arts.

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[1]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 7.

[2]Sansom, op. cit., p. 64. For further discussion on Confucianism see B. S. Bonsall, Confucianism and Taoism (London: The Epworth Press, 1934); Herbert A. Giles, Confucianism and Its Rivals (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915); Feng Yu-lan, History of Chinese Philosophy, trans. Derk Bodde (London: Allen & Unwin, 1937) Vol. I.

[3]Bonsall, op. cit., Homer H. Dubs, "Taoism," China, ed. by Harley Farnsworth MacNair (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946), pp. 266-289.

However, occult Taoism[1] and a synthetic Yin-Yang idea became widespread in Japan. Hughes makes the following comment about the Yin-Yang school.

> As with early Ionian thinkers of Hellenic culture, so with the early Chinese thinkers there were some whose minds were more attuned to what to-day we regard as the field of Natural Science. Some of these thinkers followed up ideas which came from the expert diviners, others were stimulated by the work of the calender makers, the expert on the stars, whom we hardly know whether to call astronomers or astrologers. At the beginning, however, of the third century B.C. a new school of thought came into existence under the inspiration of one Tsou Yen of Ch'i State. . . . Unfortunately his works have been entirely lost, and we can only learn of him through what others have written about him or works which plainly were written by thinkers of his school.
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> In the Han Imperial Catalogue this school figures third in the list after Confucian and Taoist schools of non-canonical philosophy, and contains names of twenty-one authors and their works. . . . The name given them is 'Yin-Yang Experts.' From this name it is not to be assumed that they were the first exponents of this famous dualism-in-monism, but only that they made a new rational use of the concepts, bringing in alongside of them the Wu Hsing [the Five Dynamic Physical Forces, wood, fire, soil, metal, water]. . . .[2]

At any rate, the understanding of Chinese learning in Japan was conditioned by (1) the gradual introduction of Chinese civilization; (2) dependence on Korean tutors whose mastery of Chinese learning is controversial; (3) linguistic limitations. The reign of Emperor Ojin (380-394) is significant because the Yamato court officially accepted the Korean scholars on Chinese learning--Wani and Achiki--as tutors to the court. During the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries, Chinese civilization, in spite of the above mentioned limitations, made a tremendous impact on Japanese people. Reischauer states:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 282-287.

[2] E. R. Hughes (ed. and trans.), Chinese Philosophy in Classical Times (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1942) p. 212.

> . . . knowledge of a Chinese calender made prayers and sacrifices to the Clan Deities . . . to ensure the coming of spring and to discover when to plant rice less necessary. Reservoirs and irrigation ditches were found to be fully as effective as incantations in combating drought. This somewhat undermined the authority of the Clan Chieftains . . . as high priests of the Clan Deities. . . .[1]

But, in order for Chinese learning to be firmly established in Japan, certain underlying notions of classical Chinese thought had to be accepted by the people in Japan. Hughes regards the following three notions as outstanding ideological features of classical Chinese philosophy:

> 1. The chief key to the mystery of the universe, and man in it, is personality, and personality at liberty through obedience to the Given in life and to the Eternal; and this is the key to ethical achievement and the achievement of the good life in society.
>
> 2. . . . the universe of matter and so of space and time is relative to a universe of the spirit; and man knows this by the leap of his imagination beyond the bounds of physical space and time. . . .
>
> 3. As the Tao Te Ching and Chuang Chou emphasize, there is a This-knowledge and a That-knowledge, and the temptation is to try to know only by the That path. Therefore we need always to remind ourselves of the This path, though in the last resort the two paths, the scientific and the religious, are both necessary.[2]

Although the Japanese in the fifth and sixth centuries were impressed by Chinese civilization and culture, they could not appreciate the assumptions implicit in classic Chinese thought. The Japanese became more conscious of the virtues of filial piety and ancestor worship, and this ethical trend of Chinese culture was merged with the early Shinto belief of taboo concerning the Yamato Imperial Family and later gradually formulated a binding theory of "loyalty to the imperial throne." Holtom summarizes the

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., p. 12.

[2]Hughes, op. cit., p. xl.

contribution of Chinese civilization, more particularly Confucianism, as follows:

> Confucianism . . . as compared with the latter [Buddhism], centered more definitely in the affairs of human society and emphasized a political morality that promoted the harmony of classes through the inculcation of obedience on the part of the ruled and education in intelligent virtue on the part of those ruling. Confucianism was not at first a great influence on the religion of the rank and file of the people, although it was accompanied by a certain amount of continental superstition that both stimulated and supplemented the native folklore and which found expression in the worship of caves and mountains, prayers and ceremonies for the production of rain and the worship of Heaven. On the side of more positive contributions to Japanese culture, Confucianism strengthened, if, indeed, it did not actually create, early Japanese ancestor worship and gave greater definiteness to the more vague and original conception of kami. It promoted family sentiment and furnished Japan with an exact, though sometimes sterile and artificial social and political etiquette, which, in spite of irrepressible tendencies in the Japanese character to seek newer and freer forms, has exercised a profound influence on the total historical development, particularly in the field of moral education.[1]

Introduction of Buddhism in the Sixth Century

The development of Buddhism in Japan was conditioned by the religious climate and the social and political factors of the sixth century. Once accepted, the subsequent "feature of Japanese Buddhism is its intimate connection with the general condition of the nation, both political and social."[2]

Buddhism was not totally unknown in Japan, especially among the naturalized groups, before the official introduction of Buddha's image to the Yamato court by an official representative from Korea in 552. It is to be noted that Buddhism was presented as the re-

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[1]Holtom, op. cit., p. 31.

[2]Sir Charles Eliot, Japanese Buddhism (London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1935), p. 179.

ligion of the superior culture of China, and very little attention was given to its Indian origin. As stated earlier, the gradual penetration of Chinese civilization prepared the intellectual atmosphere for Buddhism, which was another aspect of Chinese culture. As in the case of Confucianism, Korea was the route by which Buddhism was introduced, because for the great part of the sixth century Japan had little direct intercourse with China and was dependent upon Korea for instruction. And

> . . . when it [Chinese writing] was seen to be the vehicle for a new religion and a new political philosophy that it became essential to the ruling classes . . . and a desire to go to the sources of Confucian doctrine was an important motive, but it is probable that it was the emotional stimulus of Buddhism that gave the strongest and most widespread impulse to learning in Japan.[1]

The first Buddhist recorded in Japan is Shiba Tatto or Tachito, a refugee from China who arrived in Japan in 522, and his descendants contributed much to the Buddhist movement in Japan. A little later, either 538 or 552, the king of Paikche sent statues of Buddha and his saints, copies of scriptures, banners, and other ceremonial articles which were accompanied by the following message:

> This religion (ho, Sanskrit dharma) is the most excellent of all teachings, though difficult to master and hard to comprehend; even the sages of China would have found it not easy to grasp. It brings endless and immeasurable blessings and fruits (to its believers), even the attainment of the supreme enlightenment (Bodhi). Just as the Chinta-mani jewel is said to fulfill every need according to desire, so the Treasurers of the glorious religion will never cease to give full response to those who seek for it. Moreover, the religion has come over to Korea far from India, and the peoples . . . are now ardent followers of its teaching, and none are outside its pale.[2]

The motive of the king of Paikche in presenting Buddhism

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[1]Sansom, op. cit., p. 65. [2]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 53.

to Japan may have been mixed, but this event had a religious implication. Holtom writes:

> From this time onward throughout its entire subsequent history a major problem of Shinto has been that of adjustment to the "treasure of this wonderful doctrine." In the earlier stage of this relationship the adjustment was largely that of wholesale absorption of the more naive and less experienced Shinto into the body of its great rival. For centuries Shinto found itself more or less helpless in the presence of the more profound doctrinal content and the more aggressive priestly leadership of Buddhism.[1]

But the introduction of Buddhism soon became a political issue in the court of Yamato. Reischauer describes the political atmosphere of Japan in the sixth century as follows:

> The sixth century brought with it the rapid disintegration of the clan (uji) society on which the old Yamato Kingdom was founded. By the opening of this period three great clans had grown so powerful as to be a menace to the Imperial Family, whose ambitious members were forced to lean on them for support in various succession disputes. The Otomo clan, however, because of its corrupt Korean policy, soon lost all its power to the Mononobe. That left this strong military clan and the financially powerful Soga clan as rivals for supremacy. These two families opposed each other on every point. . . . Between the two, the Imperial Family led a precarious existence.
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> The introduction of Buddhism added fuel to the fire of clan (uji) jealousies. The Mononobe stepped forth as champions of the old Shinto Deities (Kami) and old Japan, as opposed to the new religion and the new continental culture. They obtained powerful support from the great Nakatomi clan, whose members were in charge of Shinto rites at the Imperial Court and at the important Shinto shrines scattered throughout the country. The Soga family favored Buddhism and Chinese civilization. The Sovereigns (Tenno) wavered between the two factions for some years, but the trend of the time was unmistakable, and the Imperial Family eventually joined forces with the Soga clan to annihilate the Mononobe family. This crushing defeat of the conservatives left the way clear for the wholehearted acceptance of Buddhism and Chinese culture, but at the same time it placed the Imperial Family at the mercy of the Soga clan, which then dared to murder even the Sovereign (Tenno) when he did not prove a willing tool in the hands of the Great Imperial Chieftain (Oomi).
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> This internal conflict, meanwhile, had lost Japan her sphere of influence in Imna (Mimana), which had to acknowledge some form of control by Silla (Shiragi). From time to time, thereafter, it was invaded by Silla armies trying to make this

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[1]Holtom, _op. cit._, p. 32.

control over Imna more complete. Paikche (Kudara) also was on the verge of being swallowed up by her two enemies, Silla and Kokuli (Koma), but managed to revive Japan's interest in her welfare by sending her Buddhist statues and sutras. Japan, thereupon, kept her from being completely annihilated, but was unable to come to any understanding with her over reestablishing Japan's sphere of influence in Imna.[1]

In this complex political situation, Otomo Sattehiko, who was interested in helping Paikche in her fight against Silla, persuaded Soga no Iname to accept the Buddhist image. Soga no Iname was powerful at that time; he was made O-omi (something like chancellor of the state) and married his daughters to the imperial house. The throne eventually allied itself with the Soga clan which was related by marriage to the crown and encouraged the Soga family to "try" the veneration of the image of Buddha. This was the first official sanction given to Buddhism, and Soga no Iname built a temple. For a short period of time the balance of power was maintained with Soga-Otomo versus Nakatomi-Mononobe clans.[2] But an epidemic occurred, and the anti-Buddhist party regarded it the result of accepting a foreign deity. However, Emperor Kimmei (539?-571?) was partial to Buddhism, and the Soga clan continued to promote Buddhism; the accuracy of the accounts in the Nihonshoki that temples were destroyed by the Mononobe clan is doubtful. At the same time, Soga no Iname must have worshipped Shinto deities, because he sent a message to Paikche urging the worship of the founder of the land, O-namochi, who was regarded as a Shinto deity

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

[2]Tokuji Sato, Bukkyo no Nihonteki Tenkai (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1937), pp. 1-3.

of Korean descent.[1]

Emperor Bidatsu (572?-585?) did not believe in Buddhism but was fond of Chinese learning. (The term Shinto was referred to for the first time during the reign of Bidatsu; it became necessary to distinguish the native cult from Buddhism.) Under Bidatsu, the real power in court was Iname's son, Soga no Umako, who continued to promote Buddhism for political reasons in addition to religious ones. Umako proceeded in a business-like manner, procuring images and holy relics as well as monks from Korea. After the death of Bidatsu, Soga no Umako attempted to have Prince Oye (later Emperor Yomei) on the throne. The political and religious controversy continued throughout the reign of Emperor Yomei (585?-587). At the death-bed of Yomei the battle was fought in the name of religion; anti-Buddhist families strongly opposed what they called "turning their backs upon their country's deities," but the Soga family encouraged the dying emperor to become a Buddhist and brought a Buddhist priest, Hokoku-Taishi, into the palace.[2]

Soga no Umako then put Emperor Sushun (587-592) on the throne, and appointed himself the shissei or the deputy. Umako brought more relics from Korea in 587, because there was widespread belief in the miraculous power of the holy relics. He sent for priests, temple carpenters, painters and artists. Umako also sent nuns and monks to Korea for further instruction in the Buddhist faith. But this man, who was the chief advocator of the religion of peace, was responsible for many murders, including two imperial

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[1]Antei Hiyane, Nihon Shukyoshi (Tokyo: Sankyo Shuppansha, 1925), p. 185.

[2]Ibid., pp. 154-156.

princes, and finally of Emperor Sushun himself.[1]

One of the significant accomplishments of Soga no Umako was the building of the temple, Hokoji, or "Temple of the Rise of Teaching" which was built in memory of the defeat of the enemies of the faith. Now for the first time in the history of the Yamato court, a woman was persuaded by Soga no Umako to occupy the throne. She was the empress of Bidatsu and is called Empress Suiko (592-628). Although she had children, Umako persuaded the son of the late Emperor Yomei to act as the regent. He is commonly known as Prince Shotoku.

Prince Shotoku

The role of Prince Shotoku (574-621 or 622) in the history of Japan was very important. His time was a period of disintegration of the Yamato Kingdom internally, and of loss of prestige externally. Chinese civilization and Buddhism had come into Japan, but as yet they had done little more than wreck the old structure of society. Soga no Umako had become powerful, and sovereigns were made his puppets. Japan's sphere of influence in the Korean peninsula was absorbed by Silla and Kokuli. In 589, the great Sui dynasty had united China under its sway. Japan, if she were to survive, had to abolish her decentralized system of clan government and establish a strong centralized state. The question was, would this reform take place under the supervision of the Imperial Family, or would some other clan, say the Soga family, ride to supreme power? In spite of many difficulties, Prince Shotoku started Japan on the road toward Chinese civilization which she

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[1]Samsom, op. cit., p. 70.

was to tread for many centuries. And it was Prince Shotoku who laid the foundation for the political reformation of Taika and Taiho (645-718) under the supervision of the Imperial Family.[1]

Prince Shotoku must have been a complex character, for he was an ardent Shintoist, Buddhist, and Confucianist at the same time. He survived under Soga no Umako and yet attempted many reforms. His administration as the regent for thirty years was marked by the advance of Buddhism and Chinese civilization. The chief concern of Shotoku was to propagate the moral and intellectual benefits of Buddhism, but he was also concerned with the external aspects of religion--the temples, pagodas, vestments, ceremonies, and music--which were important to the unenlightened.[2]

> Early Buddhist progress in the Japanese field was . . . not due merely to the possession of a richer speculative element and a more skillful leadership. Buddhism was the chief mediating agency of that great tide of higher continental culture which had already begun to move Japan in the aftermath of the Korean expedition of the great warrior Empress, Jingo Kogo, beginning with the close of the fourth century of the western calender. For, along with Buddhism came improved methods in nearly all the skilled occupations of the time, in weaving, brewing, metal working, road and bridge building, the digging of wells and canals, ceramics, architecture, sculpture, painting, embroidery, wood carving, forestry, sericulture, and agriculture. Buddhism brought with it literature, art, astronomy, medicine, education and more definite and humane social and political institutions. It stimulated compassion through its central teaching of jihi, or benevolence, and deepened the sense of human equality.
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> . . . .
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> Little wonder that not long after its introduction Japanese rulers were so concerned to find in Buddhism practical influences for strengthening and enriching the state. Nor were they beyond a belief that Buddhism offered a superior ceremonial magic for drawing down into human realms a maximum of favorable supernatural aid, as witnessed by the appearance of an almost fanatical devotion to the reading of luck-bringing sutras. Their interests were not merely political and

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[1] Reischauer, op. cit., p. 13.

[2] Sansom, op. cit., p. 71.

> economic, however; some at least there were who were sincerely appreciative of the higher Buddhist ideals. Shinto opposition was at first intense . . . but was obliged to compromise in proportion as patrons of the new learning multiplied in official circles. Chief among these was the royal protagonist Shotoku Taishi . . . a scholar-statesman whose liberal syncretism opened a golden age to the new religion, both as a cultus and as a metaphysic. . . .[1]

Many temples were built during Shotoku's administration. Shitennoji or "Temple of the four <u>raja</u> or heavenly kings," was commenced in 593, and Hokoji was completed in 596. By 624 there were 46 temples, 816 priests and monks, and 596 nuns.[2] Some of these institutions were more than just temples. For example, Tennoji was "a group of religious, educational, and philanthropic organizations . . . its site was selected at the seaside . . . it was there that the embassies, missionaries, and immigrants were admitted and welcomed to the country. . . ."[3]

The first official envoy from the Yamato court was sent to China in 607,[4] and in the following three centuries the strong impact of China was felt directly on all phases of Japanese life. The envoys to China took with them monks and students who on their return encouraged reform and contributed greatly to civilization. In addition, many Chinese and Koreans were induced to come to Japan.

One of the most conspicuous contributions of Shotoku was the Seventeen Articles, called by Sansom a "collection of moral

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[1]Holtom, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 32-33.

[2]Sansom, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 71.

[3]Anesaki, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 58.

[4]Reischauer, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 141.

injunctions addressed to the ruling classes,"[1] which show a turning point in the ideals of government. His assumptions may be stated as follows: Japan must be a unified nation like that of Sui China; Chinese culture is the basis of civilization; government must be based on Confucian politial philosophy and Buddhist religious ethics.

> It [the Seventeen Articles] stressed the importance of harmony between superiors and inferiors. The people were to be obedient, and the officials were to act with propriety. It urged officials to work hard, to grant posts according to merit, to judge cases fairly, and to consult together on important matters. It was against envy, gluttony, covetousness, flatterers, sycophants, patronage, anger at those with whom one disagrees, and neglect of official duties. It encouraged belief in Buddhism. It contained the revolutionary theory that the Sovereign (Tenno) was the sole ruler over all the people and all the land.[2]

Though Shotoku's injunctions were issued to the aristocracy--the backbone of Shotoku's political ideals--he nevertheless was cognizant of the unique religious tie between the throne and the masses. Thus, in 608 the following edict was issued; "We hear that our imperial ancestors ruled the world . . . observing cults for the deities . . . whereby the harmony of Yin and Yang was achieved . . . therefore, how can we neglect the cults for the deities. . . ."[3] This passage shows that Shotoku was encouraging the amalgamation of Chinese Yin and Yang ideas with Shinto. We also note that Shotoku promoted Confucian ideal, as is evident by many of the Seventeen Articles, while he publicly professed his belief in Buddhism.

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[1]Sansom, op. cit., p. 72.

[2]Reischauer, op. cit., p. 140.

[3]Hiyane, op. cit., p. 172.

Shotoku's understanding of Buddhism is well exemplified in the second clause of his Seventeen Articles:

> Sincerely revere the "Three Treasurers." The Three Treasurers are Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the final resort of all beings and the supreme object of faith for all peoples. Should any age or any people fail to revere this truth? There are few men who are utterly vicious. Every one will realize it (truth) if duly instructed. Could any wickedness be corrected without having resort to the Three Treasurers?[1]

Shotoku understood Buddhism as co-extensive with the state--that is, as a state religion, totally ignoring denominational divisions. This pespective of Shotoku is well indicated by the choice of sutras on which he ventured to lecture: (1) the Hokke-kyo (Saddharmapundarika-sutra), or the Lotus of Truth, expounding the all-embracing scheme of Buddhist salvation; (2) the Yuima-gyo (Vimalakirti-nirdesa), the discourse of the lay Buddhist sage Yuima (Vimalakirti), and ideal model of Buddhist citizenship; (3) the Shoman-gyo (Srimala-devi-simhanada), discourses between Buddha and Queen Shoman (Srimala) of Benares, the ideal representative of womanhood.[2]

In spite of the ideals and reforms implicit in edicts and injunctions promulgated by Prince Shotoku, his accomplishments were in the way of preparing for future reformation. The powerful Soga clan continued to exercise power during the regency of Shotoku. The Soga family, although it was pro-Chinese, was planning to usurp the throne. A thoroughgoing program of reform could not be adopted in Japan until the struggle for supremacy between the Imperial Family and the Soga family was settled, and this was not settled until more than twenty years after Prince Shotoku's death.[3]

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[1]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 61. [2]Ibid., p. 62.

[3]Reischauer, op. cit., p. 22.

Reforms of Taika and Taiho (645-718)

As stated earlier, reform of the socio-political structure of Japan was clearly envisaged by Prince Shotoku.

> When he became Crown Prince (Kotaishi) and Regent (Sessho) in 593, the crying need in Japan was for some unifying force that would do away with the old caste and clan barriers, that would bind together clansmen (uji-bito), hereditary corporations (be), and slaves (nuhi) in a common society, and would unite the mutually antagonistic clans (uji) through common and direct allegiance to one ruler . . . and through faith . . . in some spiritual force that could be worshipped by all men. . . . Such a ruler Shotoku-Taishi discovered in the Chinese political system, and that was one of the reasons why he established diplomatic relations with the powerful Sui dynasty . . . sending the best men he could find to study Chinese government and Confucian political philosophy, with the object of having them return to Japan and assist him in establishing a centralized bureaucracy in his own country. . . . Unfortunately, however, Shotoku-Taishi died before he could do much more than start Japan on the road she was to follow for many centuries. . . .[1]

After the death of Prince Shotoku, the Soga clan became the chief voice in political affairs. Soga no Umako had been the chief of chieftains and the uncle of the empress; he died in 626 and his more turbulent son Yemishi came into power. During the reign of Empress Jomei (628-641) all policies were made and issued from the Soga house. After the pitiful reign of Jomei, the Soga clan persuaded another lady, Kokyoku (641-645), to occupy the throne. During her reign, Soga no Yemishi showed interest in the imperial throne. He no longer bothered to attend court affairs and gave a purple cap to his son, Iruka, thus usurping the imperial prerogative of bestowing rank and office. Yemishi's children were called princes and princesses, and their "palace" was guarded by

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[1]*Ibid.*, p. 49.

bodyguards, some being Kumaso and others Ainu. The Soga clan welcomed the knowledge and skill of alien groups--both Korean and Chinese--and many priests and diviners prayed for the Soga clan.[1]

The anti-Soga party, chiefly Nakatomi no Kamatari and Prince Naka no Oye, plotted a coup which destroyed the power of the Soga clan in 645.[2]

> The central figure among the conspirators who overthrew the Soga was none other than Nakatomi (Fujiwara) Kamatari, the leading member of that conservative clan in charge of Shinto ritual which had opposed the introduction of Buddhism so violently in the preceding century. That Nakatomi (Fujiwara) Kamatari should have refused to supervise Shinto rites as the head of his clan in order to devote himself to the study of Chinese literature and Buddhism, shows us the progressive spirit of this man. . . .[3]

The Soga-controlled empress was made to abdicate and Emperor Kotoku (645-654) occupied the throne; however, the real power was in the hands of heir-apparent Prince Naka no Oye, who was supported by Nakatomi no Kamatari. In 645, Takamuku Kuromaro and Monk Bin were made Doctors of the State or kunihakase, and they advised Kamatari to adopt the Chinese bureaucratic system of government. The result was the Edict of Taika in 646; however, its reforms were not accomplished in one stroke but required nearly half a century.[4]

> [In 646] Four articles of the new civil law (ryo) was promulgated. 1. All namesake groups (minashiro), child-substitute groups (miko-shiro), imperial granaries (miyake), and the hereditary corporations (be) and private estates (tadokoro)

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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 189-190.

[2]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 79.

[3]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

[4]Sansom, op. cit., pp. 95-103.

of Imperial Chieftains (Omi), Deity Chieftains (Muraji), Court Chieftains (Tomo-no-miyatsuko), and Local Chieftains (Kuni-no-miyatsuko) were to be abolished. In their place all those of the Fifth Rank (Taifu) and above were to be given sustenance household (jikifu) according to their rank. 2. The capital was to be divided into wards and regulated. Provincial Officials (Kokushi) and District Officials (Gunji) were to be appointed to the Inner Provinces (Kinai). The District Officials were to be chosen from among the Local Chieftains (Kuni-no-miyatsuko). Barriers (seki) were to be set up, and a system of post horses (ekiba) and bell tokens as passes at the barriers was to be organized. 3. A register of household (koseki) was to be made, registers of accounts (keicho) drawn up, and allotted rice fields (handen) system established, and every fifty household (ko) were to be reckoned a township (sato, later go). 4. The old system of taxation and forced labor was to be abolished. New taxes such as tribute in kind (cho) and commuted taxes (yo) were to be levies instead.[1]

The Taika reform edict of 646 reflects the enthusiasm of the Japanese students who were overwhelmed by the splendor of T'ang China. The T'ang inherited cultural accomplishments of the Sui and previous dynasties. The frontiers of T'ang stretched to the borders of Persia, the Caspian Sea, and the Altai mountains; and Chinese influence was felt in Annam, Cochin China, Tibet, the Tarim Basin, Persia, and India. The officials were appointed by means of civil service examinations, thus creating a sort of "aristocracy of brains."[2]

Following the Chinese scheme, the reformers in Japan decided that the Imperial Family should not rule as the strongest among many clans, but as the reigning family of a bureaucratic state like that of the T'ang dynasty. But at the same time, these reformers were the aristocratic class of Japan, and they were concerned with the power and wealth of their own closed caste.

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

[2]Sansom, op. cit., p. 84.

The T'ang political and economic institutions, which were believed by the Japanese to be the secret of China's great prosperity, were so incorrigibly democratic in theory and so diametrically opposed to the interests of a landed aristocracy that the ruling class of Japan was at a loss at first as to how to set up this prosperity producing administration without at the same time losing all its ancient inherited class privileges. For some sixty years this problem made for a great deal of political unrest and discontent among the upper classes, who had been compelled to make large sacrifices in order to introduce the T'ang form of government and economy into Japan and who were still dubious about the rewards they would receive from the new system; but by "The Nara Period (707-781)" a compromise had been evolved that enabled the ruling caste to reap the harvest that came from the T'ang political and economic systems, and at the same time preserve practically all its old class privileges.[1]

A chief defect of the Taika edicts is clearly seen in the system of land allotment based on "Chinese agricultural communistic collectivism." The Japanese reformers tried to distribute arable lands among cultivators according to the number in the household (ku-bunden). But the abuse of "tax-exemptions" proved to be uncontrollable, especially on the part of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, and high government officials.[2] This abuse was accentuated later by the alliance of the court nobility and the Buddhist hierarchy in the Nara period.

Naturally, these institutions could not function as they did in China unless the old clan (uji) system of government and society was swept away. Tenchi-Tenno . . . headed the group of enthusiastic reformers that busily tore down the old order to make room for the new. His younger brother, Temmu-Tenno, led the wave of reaction. The ancient clans were still a power to be reckoned with. The old nobility insisted on having its rights and privileges respected. Hence Temmu Tenno, instead of trying to mould Japanese society to fit into T'ang garment, began to cut the foreign cloth to suit the tastes of the old clan aristocracy. The Omi Civil . . . and Penal Codes

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

[2]Kizaemon Aruga, Nihon Kazoku-seido to Kosaku-seido (Tokyo: Kawaide Shobo, 1943), p. 149.

. . . embodying the ideals of the reformers were consequently revised by Temmu-Tenno and Jito-Tenno, and were finally promulgated as the great Taiho Civil (Taiho-ryo) and Penal Codes (Taiho-ritsu) under Mommu-Tenno in 702. The administrative system set up in these law codes was, therefore, a hybrid product and in time proved highly unsatisfactory.[1]

In 669, Fujiwara (Nakatomi) no Kamatari, who exercised great influence behind the throne, died and the power went to his son, Fubito. Although the Fujiwara did not attempt to take the crown, they contrived by constant intermarriage with the Imperial Family to gain all but the outward title of sovereignty. Fujiwara Fubito was the father-in-law of two sovereigns and the grandfather of another. Actually the stability of the court was maintained by the Fujiwaras and not by the imperial household, which had no definite system of succession, as was evident in the civil war in 671.[2]

In the field of foreign relations, Japan did not have an easy time.

The overwhelming defeat by the T'ang forces in A.D. 663 of the Japanese armada sent to the assistance of Paikche (Kudara) brought to a close three centuries of an aggressive Korean policy.

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Tenchi-Tenno . . . gave up all attempts to meddle in Korean affairs . . . and accepted with relief China's friendly offer to reestablish diplomatic relations.

. . . .

With the overthrow of Paikche (Kudara) in 663 and Kokuli (Koma) in 668 by T'ang and Silla armies, the number of continental immigrants coming into Japan became greater in proportion to the total population of the Island Empire than probably at any other time in Japanese history before or since this period. These immigrants, many of whom were political refugees of good family, were happy to find new homes in Japan where they would be safe from their Silla enemies, while the Japanese government was eager to employ educated Korean officials in various petty government positions, to find places

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., p. 50.

[2]Sansom, op. cit., p. 177.

for Korean priests in the new Buddhist temples being built all over Japan, to make use of the services of Korean artists and craftsmen, and even to welcome the ordinary Korean farmer and give him land as a colonist on the eastern frontier bordering the Ezo territory.[1]

Between the Taika and Taiho reforms (645-718), various religious systems were tolerated and co-existed side by side. In fact, the Taiho reform in 702 adopted the T'ang bureaucracy to the Japanese situation. It provided for two main divisions of the central government the Great Council of State and the Department of Religion. Shinto cults were not generally neglected, as indicated by various edicts in this period. Confucianism enjoyed high prestige and in 701 the first official Confucian festival was celebrated.[2] Buddhism prospered as an instrument of civilization and political unification. Its majestic temples and magnificient rites helped the government, as its patron, to win the awe and proud support of the petty chieftains and common people. Buddhist priests competed with Shinto functionaries in "praying for rain."[3] The festivals for the dead[4] and "reciting the sutras for the protection of the state"[5] became popular practices. The musha-daiye or "great limitless meeting" and the hojoye or "meeting for liberating living beings" exercised great influence on the life of the people in this period.[6]

At the time of the foundation of the nai-dojo or the court chapel in 655, the setting up of a Buddhist family altar in each

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

[2]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 247-248.

[3]M. W. De Visser, Ancient Buddhism in Japan (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1935), I, 22.

[4]Ibid., p. 58. [5]Ibid., pp. 116-189. [6]Ibid., pp. 190-236.

household was required; however, this was not widely followed. The outstanding religious leader during this period was a Hosso priest, Dosho (629-700), who was known for his learning and divine vision. But this period accepted many superstitions, Chinese and Korean. The appearance of lucky omens, such as a white pheasant, a pink sparrow, clouds of extraordinary form, or an alleged transformation of waterfalls into wine was celebrated.[1]

The influence of En-no-Gyoja among the masses cannot be minimized.

> He was never ordained to the regular priesthood but lived a solitary life, unmarried . . . he lived thirty years among the mountains practising austere discipline . . . and his miracle-working is recorded in legends. . . . Though we cannot ascertain whether he was a Buddhist or Taoist, he is regarded as the pioneer of the Buddhist mountaineer priests, a special order of priests who played an important role in the social and religious life of the following centuries. . . .[2]

Another person who influenced the common people was the Tendai priest Hodo, an Indian monk who was said to have come to Japan by way of China and Korea riding on a purple cloud and who lived as an ascetic on Hokkesan in Satsuma, reading the Hokke-kyo or the Lotus sutra, worshipping a copper image of the Thousand-armed Avalokitesvara and a relic of Buddha, and practising mystic meditation. In 649, he reportedly cured Emperor Kotoku with his prayers. In 651, several Buddhist festivals were held according to Hodo's instruction, because he was respected by the emperor. Afterwards he said he was a rsi (sennin) from Vulture Peak, near Rajgrha, who had come to Japan only for a time in order to lead the emperor and the people on the road of Buddhism. Then, after

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[1]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 83.

[2]Ibid., p. 81.

pronouncing one gatha, he reportedly flew away through the air.[1]

These above-mentioned cases show that Buddhism during the Taika-Taiho period already had lofty metaphysics, as well as popular magical and superstitious aspects.

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[1]De Visser, op. cit., I, 195.

CHAPTER III

BUDDHISM IN THE NARA PERIOD (707-781)

Kobo-daishi, the founder of Shingon-shu or the Mantra School of Mahayana Buddhism in Japan, was born in 774 and died in 835. During his life, one of the significant changes in the history of Japan occurred--the moving of the capital from Nara (Heijo-kyo) to Kyoto (Heian-kyo). Although Kobo-daishi's activities were confined mainly to the Kyoto period, a rather thorough examination of the Nara period is necessary to appreciate his life and teaching.

Political Development in the Nara Period

As stated earlier, during the Nara period the upper nobility enjoyed the benefits of the T'ang administrative system, yet retained its ancient rights acquired under the rule of the Yamato Kingdom as well. This could not last indefinitely, as the ancient Japanese privileges and the new Chinese prosperity were based on social and economic systems that were diametrically opposite. Nevertheless, the centralized bureaucracy worked more efficiently in the early part of the Nara period than ever before or after.

> The Taiho Civil . . . and Penal Codes . . . were revised in 718. Certain offices and bureaus were abolished; others were established from time to time. Some had their personnel decreased, and some increased. Various kinds of itinerant judges, inspectors, investigators, and fact-finding officials were dispatched to the provinces . . . to see that local ad-

ministrations were being properly conducted. All kinds of economic inducements were offered officials who were willing to leave the gay capital to serve as Governors (Kami), Assistant Governors (Suke), Secretaries (Jo), and Clerks (Sakan) in the provinces. A new group of important officials known as Imperial Advisers (Sangi) were appointed to help centralize government administration in the hands of a small number of efficient statesmen.[1]

However, during the latter part of the Nara period began the collapse of the T'ang form of administration because of repeated revisions made in the system for the benefits of the Court Nobles.

Let us first glance at the rapid successions to the throne, which was often abdicated for various reasons. After the death of Emperor Mommu in 707, his mother Empress Gemmyo occupied the throne until 715. Gemmyo abdicated in favor of her daughter Empress Gensho in 715 who in turn abdicated to the child emperor Shomu in 724. Shomu abdicated in 749 and his daughter Koken stayed on the throne until forced to abdicate in 758 in favor of Junnin. But Koken deposed Junnin in 764 and became Empress Shotoku this time. She died in 770 and Konin occupied the throne until his death in 781, when Emperor Kwammu succeeded him. This history of successions resulted from conflicts between the powerful families which threatened the throne, especially since there was no law of primogeniture.

Two examples will illustrate the political climate and the growing power of religion in political matters. One is the plot which involved Shinto-priests and a Buddhist nun, who also acted as a Shinto-priestess. They enjoyed unusual respect in the imperial circle during the reign of Koken (749-758), but were later

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., p. 53.

banished because of their plot to overthrow the throne. The second incident is also related to the same empress Koken. Although she gave up the crown in 758, she attempted to rule national affairs behind the child emperor, and was allied with a Buddhist priest Dokyo. Ex-empress Koken deposed Emperor Junnin and had him murdered. Back on the throne, Shotoku (new name of Koken) made Dokyo the priest-chancellor who lived in the palace and was called ho-o or priest-king.[1]

In contrast to the lack of power of the throne, it must be noted that there gradually developed a tightly knit court nobility during the Nara period. As mentioned earlier, from the time of Prince Shotoku, there was a conscious effort to establish a centralized government. Ironically, the result was the monopolization of the newly created government positions by former clans and former local magnates who, during the Nara period, formed a powerful court nobility.[2]

> The government was woefully weak from the police and military point of view. Laws were but partially enforced at best. The large conscript armies of provincial troops . . . were little more than hordes of ragged, ill-fed farmers, serving out a term of forced labor. These men were almost useless as fighters, and toward the close of this period the government began to make a distinction between soldiers and farmers. . . . This was the origin of the fighting class that gave rise to the warriors . . . and knights (samurai) of feudal times.
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> The government was digging its own economic grave. The building of a vast capital at Nara, the establishment of a system of privincial temples . . . heavily taxed the resources of the empire. . . . This could not go on indefinitely. Already taxes were so heavy that farmers were abandoning their sustenance rice fields . . . for new lands in places seldom visited by tax collectors. In fact . . . the economic condition of the ordinary subjects (ryomin) was so bad that they

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[1] Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 285-288.

[2] Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

> had sunk virtually to the level of slaves . . . so that there was no longer any definite economic distinction between the two classes. . . . Provincial Officials (Kokushi) were amassing fortunes, and the temples were becoming an economic power hard to control.
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> . . . .
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> The whole public land system was breaking down. Almost all land was supposed to belong to the state, and every farmer was to have a farm varying in area according to the size of his family. This was known as the allotted rice fields (handen) system. The government, however, found itself unable to enforce the system in certain parts of the country. Moreover, as the population increased and outstripped the amount of cultivated lands, it became increasingly evident that vast reclamation projects had to be undertaken to keep the allotted rice fields system working. The government failed in its attempts to open up new rice fields (konden) and had to fall back on private enterprise.[1]

Actually, the central government could not control provincial officials. The duties of a provincial governor were extremely comprehensive because he represented in his person all departments of state.[2] During the Nara period, these local governors held titles which were hitherto unknown. Some of the local magnates asked court nobles to be titular holders of the posts, under whom they exercised their power. The salary of the provincial governor was moderate, but the opportunity for local exploitation was plentiful.[3] Under the provincial governors were appointed district governors (gunshi), who were usually minor territorial gentry; the office became local and hereditary. The repeated edicts forbidding the appointments of relatives to district positions indicate that this was a real problem. The poor were constantly squeezed, and aristocrats, both in the capital and in the provinces, increased in number, partly as a result of polygamy. And the

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

[2]Sansom, op. cit., p. 161.

[3]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

gap between the aristocracy and the masses became greater--socially, politically, financially and intellectually.

On the other hand, the unproductive and leisure classes enjoyed a high culture.

> A steady stream of Japanese embassies was sent to the T'ang court. These kept Japan informed about the latest developments on the continent, and brought back books, priests, and new political and religious ideas. This meant that Japan had to remain on peaceful terms with Silla . . . as most Japanese embassies to China sailed along that country's coast. . . . Relations between the two became quite strained after the terrible rebellion of An Lu-shan in 755 showed that the glorious days of the T'ang dynasty were over and China was once more entering a period of decline. . . . The new kingdom of Bokkai made its appearance in Manchuria in 712, and opened up relations with Japan which were quite friendly. The influx of immigrants from Korea and China continued throughout this period.
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> A high type of culture was developed among a small group at the Imperial Court in Nara. The fine arts and literature flourished. The authorities encouraged learning. . . . Artists were patronized, scholars were supported, and the Buddhist priesthood was shown every mark of consideration.[1]

Indeed, Buddhism played an increasingly significant role in this development.

The Role of Buddhism in the New Political Structure

Buddhism was originally imported and supported by powerful clan leaders who wished worldly benefits, prolongation of life, increase of wealth, prestige, and the security of the clan system. Indeed they venerated Buddha Sakyamuni, Yakushi, Kwannon, Miroku, and Shitenno, but they were treasured because of their alleged potency--Sakyamuni for healing and prolongation, Yakushi for healing, Kwannon for avoidance of calamities. The sutras--Konkwomyokyo,[2]

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[1]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

[2]De Visser, op. cit., II, 431-438.

Myoho-rengekyo,[1] Ninno-hannyakyo,[2] Yakushikyo[3] were recited ostensibly for healing and longer life.

One of the significant contributions of Prince Shotoku (574-621 or 622) in the history of Buddhism in Japan was the fact that he officially tried to integrate Buddhism into the structure of the centralized government which he envisaged, as we see in the second article of his proclamation of 604. In the course of time Buddhism adjusted itself to its new role as the religion of the bureaucratic state. For instance, the reciting of Konkwomyokyo was said to have the merit of prosperity for those who believed in it; at the same time, this sutra also mentions that the nation which reads it is to be protected by Shitenno, and all types of calamities and evils are to be driven away from her, and her army will be strengthened and the nation will be spared from famine. In other words, Buddhism allegedly had qualities to satisfy the need of the nation, too.

The government during the Taika period (645-650) proclaimed that the temples built by the clan leaders (who had difficulty in maintaining them) would be subsidized by the government. Granted that this was one way to integrate the clan leaders into the hierarchical centralized national structure, nevertheless it was a significant change of national policy.

The building of temples is indicative of the influence of Buddhism. The government actively supported Buddhism in the form of fuko or allotted land.[4] The government, in order to cultivate

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[1] Ibid., II, 625-636. [2] Ibid., I, 149-159.

[3] Ibid., II, 533-540. [4] Keishitsu, op. cit., p. 8.

new land, often encouraged temples and monasteries to invest money for this purpose. Such a national policy resulted in a rapid increase in the number of temples. Between the middle of the sixth century and the middle of the seventh century there were only 60 temples built, but in less than fifty years after Taika, over 110 temples were erected. During the Nara period 361 temples were built. Also to be noted is the geographical distribution of the temples. Before Taika, most of the temples were found in the Yamato area or areas close to Yamato, while later more were found in the distant areas.[1] Reischauer writes:

> Buddhism was honored as the state religion, and its spread was assisted in every way possible. Its architecture, sculpture, gorgeous and mysterious rites, high moral code, and metaphysics won the admiration and confidence of the Japanese. A new religion was needed for new times. The Buddhist priests seemed to be competent to cope with all emergencies. They knew the proper charms to recite, which sutras to read, to what Buddha (Butsu) to pray for help when the country was threatened with foreign invasions or internal disturbances, when the people were dying by hundreds from smallpox, or when there were earthquakes, floods, droughts, and famines. Hence Buddhism was adopted as an instrument of government. A hierarchy appointed by the Sovereign (Tenno) was entrusted with the control of all priests and nuns. The government chose the abbots and head priests of the great monasteries and temples to make sure that the proper men were placed in these strategic positions. Each province (kuni) was ordered to establish a special provincial monastery and nunnery. Just as each province had a political center in its provincial headquarters (kokufu), with its administrative officials to govern the country, so each province was to have a religious and cultural center in its Guardian Temple of the Province (Kokubun-ji) and Atonement Nunnery of the Province (Kokubunni-ji), with their priests and nuns to pray for the welfare of the nation, to care for the sick, to teach the people, and to work for a higher level of civilization. As the Government Offices of the Great Council of State (Dajokancho) were the center of the political system, the Great Ise Shrine (Ise-daijingu) the center of the Shinto worship, so now the great Todai-ji at Nara was to be the center of the new nation-wide system of Buddhist religion and cultural centers. In it was set up a gigantic bronze

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[1] Sato, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

> statue of the Buddha Rushana (Vairocana). As the Great Ise Shrine was the main Shinto shrine to the Clan Deity . . . of the Imperial Family, so the Todai-ji was declared the Imperial Family's main clan temple. . . . It was inevitable that the Japanese, in their attempt to unify the various forces that made up their culture, should come to the logical conclusion that the mighty Sun Goddess (Amaterasu-Omikami) of the Shinto pantheon and the ancestress of the Imperial Family was somehow identified with the Buddha Rushana (Vairocana) whose tremendous statue sat in the Todai-ji. This was but one of many steps taken to fit Buddhism into the lives and thoughts of the people of eighth century Japan.[1]

The Guardian Temple of the Province (Kokubunji) played a significant role in the transformation of Buddhism from a religion of the clans to a state religion. It was ordered by the government that Konkwomyokyo and Ninnokyo and other sutras for the protection of the nation were to be read in each temple regularly. Such a temple in each district involved much expense, but the program to nationalize Buddhism through the erection of the Guardian Temple of the Province was just about completed in 757.[2] The Todaiji enjoyed the special prestige as the national cathedral. One can imagine the strain imposed on the people by the building of the capital and these temples. Naturally, farmers in Nara province and nearby districts were expected to contribute labor more than people of other localities. It was hard to get men from distant provinces and when they were forced to come, they were most harshly treated. Many died of starvation and exposure on the way back, until the government established stores of food on the main supply routes. This invited more abuse and banditry.[3]

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[1] Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

[2] Keishitsu, op. cit., p. 7.

[3] Sansom, op. cit., p. 172.

Although the standard doctrine of the Nara period was the Hosso (Yogacara) sect, which, with its emphasis on prolongation of life, wealth, and prosperity in this world, met the demands of the aristocracy, the government deliberately promoted the Kegon (Avatansaka) sect in order to weaken the Hosso sect. The Kegon sect was introduced in 736, but only four years later lectures of the Kegon school were sponsored by the government. The Kegon school played a leading role in the building of the Guardian Temple of the Province in 741 and the building of the Todaiji in 743. Pleased with the national character of the Kegon sect as understood by the Buddhists in the Nara period, the government officially proclaimed the Kegon school as the national religion in 749.[1]

Buddhism, which had played such an important role in the centralization and unification of the state, gradually became a menace to the nation. One aspect of this is seen in its relation to the land system. As stated earlier, the government found that it would take capital to irrigate lands, and it had to be done by wealthy court nobles, country gentry, Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, with the result that Buddhist temples and monasteries became the largest landowners. For instance, Todaiji was reported to own 3,462 cho (about 10,000 acres), Gangoji 453 cho, Yakushiji 699 cho, and Horyuji 396 cho; all this was tax-exempted land. Yet Buddhist temples and monasteries acquired more land by donation, purchase, cultivation, and illegal business transactions.[2] In an

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[1]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

[2]Aruga, op. cit., pp. 154-181.

economic crisis of this kind, the Buddhist priests, now integrated into the national bureaucracy as semi-government officials, enjoyed the privilege of tax-exemption. Many farmers who could not bear all the taxes and other economic burdens chose the priesthood to escape taxation, which caused a decrease in the number of taxpayers. The government, through its official channels, tried to examine the motives and character of the priests in this period, but in vain.[1]

Now, we shall trace the shift in national policy concerning Buddhism. As early as 713, the central government accused the Buddhist monasteries of taking possession of unlimited numbers of fields.[2] In 783, the government ordered that no more land could be donated or sold to the Buddhist temples. The same year the usury of the temples was strictly forbidden. (The average rate of interest in the Nara period was five per cent for loans by the government and ten per cent by private money lender. Buddhist temples were strict in demanding payment, sometimes up to fifteen per cent, and if the people failed to pay, they took their land, house and other property.)[3]

In the meantime, with the decline of the prestige, power, and wealth of the Imperial Family, the court nobility rose in the social, economic, and political scene. As mentioned earlier, the original clan leaders, shortly before and during the Nara period, became government titled nobility or court nobility. The centra-

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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 280-284.

[2]Sansom, op. cit., p. 170.

[3]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

lization and unification of the state robbed them of the type of autonomy and prestige they enjoyed before the Taika-Taiho period (645-718). But the weakening of the central government gave new power to the court nobility.

However, the court nobility gained their new power partly through an alliance with Buddhism--not the six schools of Buddhism which flourished in the Nara period, but the new schools, namely Tendai and Singon. We observed that the original Buddhism which the clan leaders patronized was soon swallowed by the government policy, and the rising court nobles began to change their allegiance from state Buddhism to the Mikkyo (mystical, or hidden) or Mantra Buddhism which extended its influence as the support of the court nobility increased.

Alliance of New Aristocracy and Buddhism

About the middle of the Nara period, the alliance between the rising court nobility and Buddhism became clearly observable. Let us first examine the internal development of Buddhism.

Originally the Buddhist sangha or monasteries were at the same time the monks' living quarters. They lived there for the purpose of mutual self-discipline. But in the course of development of Buddhism in Japan, these sangha gradually became the chapel of intercession--that is, the monks were paid to recite sutras or say prayers for other people, first for the clan leaders who patronized them, then for the central government which supported them. By the middle of the Nara period, when the power of the central government was on the decline, the intercession was of-

fered to the new rising aristocracy, the court nobles.[1]

One factor in this change was the early Shinto idea of keeping sickness and death from sacred places. As Buddhism attracted more native monks and nuns, sickness and death became important issues in the monasteries and convents. Toward the end of the seventh century the government issued edicts urging monasteries to secure private living quarters outside of their sacred boundaries for the recuperation of monks and nuns. Gradually this became a common pattern and those monks who had private means from wealthy families or relatives or more often wealthy devotees made it a habit to keep private houses outside the monasteries and commuted daily to say their offices and intercessions. It became a difficult question to draw a line between what belonged to the monasteries and what belonged to these private houses. Numerous cases may be cited where these private quarters accumulated wealth, often supported by wealthy and powerful patrons thus making it impossible for the monasteries to control them. These private quarters of the monks later became known as _inge_ or _monzeki_ and played an important role as the court nobility became more powerful. In addition to this,

> . . . many Buddhist institutions were being established privately for no other purpose than to hold land that was theoretically offered to the temple by wealthy families, but was actually owned and controlled by those same doners, and to exert pressure on the government to have such lands declared free from taxation.[2]

This development coincided with the bankruptcy of the Yamato government during the middle of the Nara period, which led

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[1] _Ibid._, pp. 3-36. [2] Reischauer, _op. cit._, p. 56.

the government to withdraw financial support of the Buddhist temples. Instead, the court nobility, who were increasing in financial power, began to support the priests and temples.[1]

In this connection, mention should be made of the development of the manors (shoen) among the court nobility.

> The manors (shoen) originated in several ways. In the first place, not all the private estates (tadokoro) of the clan aristocrats were confiscated. At least such estates still existed in 692, and some temples later claimed they had received certain shoen prior to 701, so there is rather good evidence to show that some of the old tadokoro turned into shoen without ever having passed through the stage of being part of the public domain. Temple rice fields (jiden) and shrine rice fields (shaden), in the second place, easily turned into shoen, because they were grants from the government in perpetuity to the great temples and shrines, and were tax free, so the central administration soon lost all contact with the lands and paid little attention to what became of them. Thirdly, the government made grants of merit rice fields (koden) to those who had rendered the state special services. These were taxable rice fields . . . but could be kept for long periods of time. . . . Consequently, such fields soon became private property in all but name, and found their way into the shoen. . . .[2]

Although most of these manors were technically taxable, many evaded taxation through political manipulation.[3] The situation became more serious as the country gentry began to incorporate their own lands with those of the court nobles. Undoubtedly the country landowners found it advantageous to ally with the government officials who could use their positions to protect their land. The usual arrangement was for the local landowner to donate his land technically to the court noble, thus offering him part of the income from the land, but retaining the rest. This practice made

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[1]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 78-82.

[2]Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

[3]Aruga, op. cit., pp. 154-155; Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 35-37.

the court nobles all the more wealthy and powerful.

However, the court nobility had no military power to protect their property. Also these families were constantly weakened by disharmony within their own families caused by the distribution of land and property from one generation to the next. This was a serious problem in the polygamous set-up. Faced with these two problems, external and internal, the court nobility turned to another social power, Mikkyo or Mantra Buddhism, mainly because established temples and monasteries in Nara were so wealthy and powerful that they competed with the court nobility.[1]

The theological and philosophical aspects of Mikkyo or Mantra Buddhism will be discussed later. Here we must see how Mikkyo became the special ally of the rising aristocracy.

Already during the Nara period, Mikkyo began to attract the upper strata of Yamato society. Prior to the Nara period, Konkwomyokyo, Hokkekyo, and Ninnokyo were read as sutras because of their supposed potency to protect the state, but these same sutras were soon also considered to be beneficial to the court nobility. Thus the perspective and intention behind the recitation of the same sutras changed. As early as the end of the seventh century, 137 Mantra sutras were known in Japan, including Dainichikyo,[2] Kongochokyo,[3] and Soshijikarakyo.[4] Also Juichimenkwannon

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[1]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 34-36.

[2]De Visser, op. cit., I, 149.

[3]Bunyiu Nanjio, A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1929), p. 123.

[4]Ibid., p. 123.

(eleven-faced Kwannon), Kumen-kwannon (nine-faced kwannon) and other _bodhisattvas_ venerated in Mantra Buddhism became popular in Japan. Thus, the growth of _Mikkyo_ was initiated, through the demands of the court nobility, about the middle of the Nara period, though traditionally the period is referred to as the era of six Mahayana Buddhist schools.

This new trend was not wholly welcomed among the orthodox six schools. Though Buddhism, from the middle of the Nara period, attempted to meet the demands of the court nobility through _Mikkyo_, it was not at all clear whether _Mikkyo_ would be established as a separate entity. In fact, there were two basic questions which had to be solved before _Mikkyo_ could become firmly established. One was the establishment of a center of Buddhism outside of Nara, and the other was the theological and philosophical justification of _Mikkyo_ as a legitimate school of Buddhism. The first issue was fought by Dengyo-daishi and the second by Kobo-daishi.[1]

In this connection, it must be mentioned that Dengyo-daishi (767-822) was also interested in the Mantraistic ideals, though his earlier training was in the Hosso and the Sanron schools. He became interested in the Tendai doctrine and attempted to set up a monastery at Mount Hiei. Dengyo was the first Buddhist leader in Japan who tried to break away from the established center of Buddhism in the capital of Nara. One of his lifelong struggles concerned the establishment of the ordination hall (_kaidan_) outside of Nara. In spite of the understanding support he secured from

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[1]Daiei Kaneko, _Dengyo Kobo to Nihon-bunkwa_ (Tokyo: Naikaku Insatsu-kyoku, 1940, pp. 1-100.

the court, such a step was bitterly fought against by the leaders of the six schools of Nara. Only seven days after Dengyo's death it was finally accomplished. The tension between Dengyo and Nara Buddhist leaders was caused by the fact that Dengyo was convinced that the situation in Nara was detrimental to a dynamic Buddhist movement. Therefore, he actively supported the government policy to move the capital from Nara to Kyoto. In this, consciously or unconsciously, Dengyo sided with the rising aristocracy. Nara Buddhist leaders were not pleased to lose these court nobility.[1]

It was the theological and philosophical synthesis of Kobo-daishi which systematized the loosely-knit Mantra (Mikkyo) practices and formed them into the powerful ideology influencing the Heian period (781-1167); this synthesis will be discussed in considerable detail later.

Kobo's theological amalgamation of Buddhism and Shinto, commonly known as Ryobu-Shinto, justified the practical alliance of Buddhism and the court nobility. As noted before, Buddhist temples accumulated land and property first by government support and later by other means. One disadvantage was that their lands were scattered all over the country. Protection of these lands from land-hungry officials and oppressed peasantry was partly solved through practical cooperation between Buddhism and Shinto. This practical solution of the coexistence of the two religions developed very gradually and culminated in the Ryobu-Shinto amalgamation which was theolized by Kobo-daishi.

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[1]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 58-67.

Coexistence and Amalgamation of Buddhism and Shinto

At first, Shinto priests reacted against the introduction of Buddhism into Japan. However, in the course of time, both Buddhism and Shinto began to adjust to each other. Many persons found it possible to adhere to both Shinto and Buddhism. In fact, it was a commonly accepted notion that Shinto was the traditional national cult, Confucianism the moral principle underlying the social political structure, and Buddhism the religion of the individual; thus, three systems could exist side by side.

The unique contribution of the mountain priesthood, founded by En-no-gyoja must be seen in this setting.[1] After the Taika reform, when Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto coexisted, a unique popular religious faith arose. This incorporated, in addition to the three religions mentioned above, Taoistic ideas, astrology, and magic. One of the Taiho reform edicts forbade Buddhist priests and nuns to engage in magical and occult practices. Even Gyogi,[2] who was highly respected in the Nara period, was accused of threatening innocent folks by preaching the doctrine of evil consequences. Under the influence of Gyogi, some farmers spread superstitious teachings. Or, one of the Mannyo poems states that if one sets his mind on a far away spot, he can fly over mountains; this reflects the Taoistic ideal as understood by the Japanese in those days. Kume-no-Sennin, the hero of Fuso-ryakki and Konjakumono-

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[1]Eliot, op. cit., p. 213; Anesaki, op. cit., p. 81.

[2]August Karl Reischauer, Studies in Japanese Buddhism (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917), p. 86.

gatari, illustrates the state of mind of some of the Taoistic practitioners who did not entirely succeed in departing from this mundane world. Therefore, it was not unusual to find a man like En-no-gyoja in the Taika period. After him came the famous five Yamabushi or Mountain Priests--Gigaku, Gigen, Gishin, Jugen, and Hogen--who gradually formulated shukendo or the school of mountain priesthood. Those who participated in Shukendo were called gyoja which literally means "persons who practice." (Later in the Heian period shukendo became an integral part of both the Tendai and Shingon schools and became recognized as Tendai shukendo and Shingon shukendo respectively. Shukendo lasted until the Meiji era when the amalgamation of Shinto and Buddhism was dissolved, and even today there are a number of gyoja who follow the traditional method of mountain discipline.) Actually shukendo was commonly known in the Nara period as zatsu-shu or mixed sect, including Shinto, Buddhism, and Taoist ideas.[1]

Although later Buddhists claimed that Gyogi, the priest who was active during the reign of Emperor Shomu (724-749), conceived the theory of honji-suijaku, which believes that every Shinto deity is a manifestation of a buddha or bodhisattva, the formulation of this doctrine seemed to have developed later in the Heian period.[2] Nevertheless, we observe that Gyogi and many others did not find it difficult to believe in both Shinto and Buddhism. This pattern became more widespread in rural areas where Buddhism came in contact with the peasantry.

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[1]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

[2]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 137.

Historically, rural areas of Japan were inhabited by people of the same _dozoku_; _dozoku_ did not necessarily refer to blood relations exclusively, though many actually were. Some members of one _dozoku_ were related by marriage to members of another _dozoku_, but this relationship was secondary to the relationship of _dozoku_. The communal cohesion of the _dozoku_ was maintained by: (a) a paternal community organization with _honke_ or the main family as the center; (b) residence in the same locality; (c) claiming the same _uji-gami_ or deity. Naturally, in this setting the communal religious cult played a significant role.[1] _Honke_ or _omoya_ was the family of the original landowner or cultivator. Employees and slaves, in the course of time, became integral parts of the _dozoku_.[2] Usually the Shinto priests of the _dozoku_ shrines were members of the leading family. Therefore, _honke_ combined both religious and communal leadership.[3] During the Taika-Taiho period this structure of _dozoku_ was disrupted by the government policy of reallotment of land. However, the _uji-gami_ or local _dozoku_ deities soon adopted the alien elements that entered their territories, and a village solidarity similar to the earlier _dozoku_ structure was again formulated.[4]

When Buddhist temples and monasteries acquired scattered land in these rural areas and developed manors not unlike the manors of court nobility, such village structures would be found within the manor boundaries. Buddhist monasteries were not productive communities, and they had to depend on the labor of the

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[1] Aruga, _op. cit._, p. 104. [2] _Ibid._, p. 107.

[3] _Ibid._, p. 114. [4] _Ibid._, pp. 154-181.

peasantry in these manors. But the rural population found the source of their solidarity in Shinto deities and Shinto cults. Thus Shinto deities or uji-gami were naturally brought into the Buddhist manors. Although Buddhist temples and monasteries had no police protection, this development resulted in the protection of Buddhist property by the Shinto taboo which the local peasantry observed strictly. Such a practice identified the land which belonged to the Buddhist temples with the sacred land of the Shinto deity. Shinto priests by this time welcomed such practical cooperation with Buddhism. These shrines were known as chinju, and later chinju shrines were built in such important temples as Toji in Kyoto and Enryakuji at Mount Hiei.[1]

On the other hand, Buddhist temples were built on the sacred compounds of Shinto shrines, the idea being that these temples were dedicated to the Shinto deities and called jinguji. The earliest one was the Kibi-jinguji at Echizen (present Fukui prefecture), followed by Kashima-jinguji, Tado-jinguji and Ise-jinguji. Many of the jinguji were built according to alleged oracles sent by the Shinto deities. For instance, "I have been a god for a long time as a result of my karma, now I wish to adhere to the teaching of Buddha . . ." and "I have much suffering since I received the divine body. . . . Now let me believe in Buddha and be emancipated from Shinto," illustrate the basic tenet of the religious sentiment which later developed into a fuller amalgamation of Shinto and Buddhism.[2] Beginning in 794 Buddhist sutras were read at the altars of Shinto shrines.

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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., p. 269. [2]Ibid., p. 268.

In the middle of the Nara period, Shinto deities were often regarded as in need of deliverance or emancipation by the teaching of buddha. As the coexistence and mutual assistance of Shinto and Buddhism became widespread, the position of Shinto deities were elevated, as it were, and in 783 the deity of Hachiman was named Daijizaiten-bosatsu (bodhisattva), thus identifying the Shinto deity with the Buddhist bodhisattva.[1] This was only one step behind the belief achieved in the Heian period which identified the Shinto deity with buddha. However, the six orthodox schools of Buddhism which were known during the Nara period did not formulate a theological system to justify the amalgamation of Shinto and Buddhism. This task was later accomplished by the Mantra (Mikkyo) school of Kobo-daishi.

Buddhist Schools of the Nara Period

Prior to the Nara period, Buddhism in Japan was not deeply concerned with denominational divisions. Buddhist leaders had been preoccupied with other great issues. The introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century had political implications. When the pro-Buddhist party was victorious, Buddhism became for all practical purposes the state religion.

This does not mean that the Japanese were unaware of different philosophical and theological schools within Buddhism. However, these schools had been systematized in India and China before coming to Japan, and in Japan they were regarded as different aspects of the same teaching of Buddha. In China, Buddhism

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[1]Keishitsu, op. cit., p. 94.

had had to cope with two established religions--Confucianism and Taoism. In Japan, the only religious rival was Shinto which did not possess a metaphysical or theological system. Although Confucianism and Taoism were also introduced, the former became a political and ethical teaching and the latter mingled with Shinto among the masses.

In spite of the basic indifference of Japanese Buddhism to theological and philosophical aspects, we note that during the Nara period the following six Buddhist schools were known in Japan. They were: (a) the Sanron or Madhamika School, (b) the Jojitsu or Satyasiddhi School, (c) the Hosso or Yogacara School, (d) the Kusha or Abbhidharma-kosa School, (e) the Ritsu or Vinaya School, and (f) the Kegon or Avatansaka School. However, as Eliot points out, these schools were not clearly divided:

> It is said that four sects were introduced into Japan before A.D. 700, namely, the Jojitsu and Sanron both in 625, the Hosso in 654, and the Kusha in 658. But they were not sects in the later sense, that is corporations pledged to support particular doctrines, but simply philosophical schools which expound certain text-books. How little rivalry there was between them is shown by the statement that the Korean priest Ekwan, who resided at the Genkoji temple, introduced both the Sanron and Jojitsu and that the two Chinese priests Chitsu and Chitatsu propagated both the Hosso and Kusha. Also some sects are said to have been introduced more than once. This probably means little more than that learned persons from time to time lectured on their doctrines, which concerned philosophy rather than practical questions such as what deity one ought to worship. Little is heard of Amida before the Nara period, but the Nihongi mentions that in 640 and again in 652 the priest Eon . . . was invited to the palace to expound the Muryojukyo, that is, the Greater Sukhavati-vyuha. . . . But there is no hint that Eon represented any special school.[1]

Reischauer describes the rise of sectarian difference as follows:

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[1]Eliot, op. cit., p. 212.

> It is a rather significant fact that Buddhism was firmly rooted in Japan before any sectarian differences were introduced. For a period of about seventy years wise missionaries were content with teaching the general tenets of their faith. . . . The people of Japan were really not intellectually prepared to appreciate the fine points of the sectarian speculations, and were more interested in the external trappings of religion and the similar teachings contained in the moral maxims and precepts more or less common to all the sects. Finally, however, the sectarian differences made their appearance early in the seventh century.[1]

Curiously enough the first philosophical school which was introduced to Japan was the highly metaphysical Sanron School.[2] Its headquarters was the famous Horyuji, and it is said that Prince Shotoku was educated in this philosophical school.[3] Takakusu characterized the main tenet of this school as follows:

> The Indian name of the Mahayanistic Negativism is Madhyamika, the 'doctrine of the Middle Path,' or Sunyatavada, the 'Theory of Negativity' or 'Relativity' . . . this school is known by the appellation of . . . Sanron, the 'Three Treatises.' There are three fundamental texts which are devoted to the Doctrine of the Middle Path by seriously refuting the wrong views of Brahmanism, Hinayana, and Mahayana schools other than the Sanron School. Of these, the first text is the Madhyamika Sastra by Nagarjuna [100-200 A.D.] . . . . It was translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva [409 A.D.] . . . . In a treatise of 400 verses Nagarjuna refutes certain wrong views of Hinayana or of general philosophers thereby rejecting all realistic and pluralistic ideas and indirectly establishing his monistic doctrine.
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> The second text is the Dvadasa-dvara, the 'Twelve Gates' of Nagarjuna. . . . It has twelve parts or chapters in all, and is chiefly devoted to correcting the errors of the Mahayanists themselves. The third is the Sata Sastra, the 'One Hun-

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[1]A. K. Reischauer, op. cit., p. 85.

[2]E. Steinilber-Oberlin, The Buddhist Sects of Japan, trans. Marc Logé (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1938), pp. 37-48; Junjiro Takakusu, The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1947), pp. 96-107; Karl Ludvig Reichelt, Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism, trans. K. V. W. Bugge (Shanghai: The Commercial Press, 1934), p. 332.

[3]Anesaki, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

dred Verse Treatise' of Aryateva, a pupil of Nagarjuna. This treatise of Aryadeva is mainly refutation of the heretical views of Brahmanism.

. . . .

The ideal of the Sanron School seems to have been Nisprapanca, the 'inexplicable in speech and unrealizable in thought.' The basis of all arguments is what we call the 'Four Points of Argumentation': 1. ens (sat.) 2. non-ens (asat), 3. either ens or non-ens, 4. neither ens nor non-ens.

. . . .

. . . Ekwan (Hui-kuan) from Kauli, a state in Korea, came to Japan in 625 and taught the Sanron doctrine at the monastery Gwangoji in Nara. This is the first transmission of the school to Japan. The second transmission was by Chizo, a pupil of Ekwan. The third transmission was by Doji, a pupil of Yuan-k'ang, the author of a commentary on the three Treatises.

In China the Sanron school did not flourish after the rise of the Hosso School of the famous Hiuen-tsang and his pupil Ki. However, an Indian teacher, Suryaprabhasa, came to China in 679 and taught the Sanron to Hsien-shou, the author of a work on the Twelve Gates of Nagarjuna. His line of transmission is called the New Sanron School to distinguish it from the Old Sanron School, a name given to that system from Kumarajiva to Chi-tsang during 409-623 A.D.[1]

In Japan, the Sanron School was the main Buddhist teaching until the rise of the Hosso School during the Nara period. There were two main lines within Sanron, and they were known as the Daianji-ryu and the Gangoji-ryu. It should be noted that the first Sanron teacher, Ekwan, lectured on the Three Sastras as "prayers to procure rain" with success, and was appointed <u>So-jo</u> or Bishop. The third patriarch of the Sanron School, Doji (d. 744) was educated both in the Sanron and the Hosso schools. He went to China in 701 and studied the Chen-yeng or Shingon teaching under Subhakarasinha, one of the <u>Mantra</u> patriarchs in China. Thus, the <u>Mantra</u> element entered the Sanron School in Japan, and it was transmitted to Kobodaishi through Sanron priests, Zengi and Gonzo. The Sanron school, though influential, was never established completely as an inde-

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[1]Takakasu, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 96-97, 100.

pendent institution. It was studied as a weapon of dialectic argument by students of all the Buddhist schools. The Sanron school claimed to have their own patriarchs after Doji, but the fourth patriarch of this school, Chonen (d. 1016), adhered to a combination of Sanron doctrine and Shingon practice. Later, the Sanron temples were completely taken over by the Kegon School.

The Jojitsu School[1] is a Hinayanistic Negativism and is called Jojitsu--Satyasiddhi, Completion of Truth--after the title of the work by Harivarman of India who lived in the fourth century. In India, the Jojitsu belonged to the Sautrantika School--Keiryo-bu. In a sense, the Jojitsu inherited the tenets of orthodox Buddhism. The ethos of the Jojitsu is described briefly and simply in Steinilber-Oberlin's book:

> The Kusha (the Abhidharma-Kosa) doctrine teaches that the 'ego' alone is illusory, but that the dharmas are real. The Jo-jitsu doctrine teaches that both the 'ego' and the dharmas are equally illusions . . . the Jo-jitsu sect convenes you to a double meditation on the following classical theme: 'True dharmas, in which no 'ego' exists, are like an empty vase. And as the substance of the vase does not exist in itself, just so the dharmas are inexistent in themselves.' This theme of meditation, which brings to the spirit a sense of liberating detachment, is called the Meditation on the Two Nothingnesses . . . in the demonstration of the second nothingness . . . the past no longer exists--the future does not exist as yet--the present moment alone is real. But what is the present moment? Does not the present vanish as soon as it is born? Everything is and is not at the very moment we think of it. . . . What we call reality would therefore seem to be but a moment's flash.[2]

Yet, the moment of reason (Setsuna in Japanese) escapes us. It appears as though the state of things were existing, even

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 34-6; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 74-79; Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 214-218; Reichelt, op. cit., p. 332.

[2]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 35.

as a circle of fire seen when a rope-match is turned round very quickly. This is called the sozoku-ke or "the illusion of continuous phenomena." Those things which are produced by certain causes and combinations of circumstances are called the injoke or "the illusion of contingent phenomena." Thus the Jojitsu teaching was close to the teaching of Buddha: "No substance (anatma), no duration (anitya), and no bliss (dukkha) except Nirvana (sukha)."[1]

Some authorities classified the Jojitsu School as Mahayanistic, but Tao-hsuan in the seventh century settled the question by pronouncing that it was Hinayanistice and Sautrantic.[2] This teaching was introduced to Japan by Ekwan in 625. When Prince Shotoku wrote commentaries on the three Sutras, Saddharmapundarika (Hokke), Srimala (Shoman), and Vimalakirtti-nirdesa (Yuima), he depended heavily on the explanation of Kotaku, who was a teacher of the Jojitsu school. As early as 794, the government in Japan officially proclaimed the Jojitsu as a subdivision of the Sanron School.

As to the introduction of the Hosso School,[3] Eliot states:

> . . . the Hosso still exists (in Japan) because it owns the temples of Horyuji, Yakushiji, and Kofukuji in or near Nara. . . . The Hosso is said to have been introduced no less than four times. First in 654 by Dosho, who was one of a large body of priests sent to study in China in the previous year and who received instruction from Hsuan-Tsang himself: then in 658 by Chitsu and Chitatsu, who are said to have also propagated the Kusha: later in 703 by three priests called Chiho, Chiran, and Chiyu, and finally in 735 by Genbo, the adversary

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[1] Takakusu, op. cit., p. 74.

[2] Ibid., p. 75.

[3] Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 49-57; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 80-95; Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 218-226; Reichelt, op. cit., p. 332.

of Fujiwara Hirotatsu.[1]

Hosso (Dharma-laksana) means "characteristics of Dharma," and this school aims to investigate the nature and qualities of all existences. The first founder of the school was Asanga who lived in India in the fifth century, who wrote the text Yogacara-bhumi; therefore, this school was called the Yogacara School. Asanga's brother, Vasubandhu, further systematized the philosophical aspect of the Yogacara and emphasized vijnaptimara or "mere ideation"--that nothing but ideation exists. The Vijnaptimara provides psychological and cosmological theories and proceeds, as do the Hinayanists, with the analytical division of the five Skandhas and the Dharmas, but its aim is the religion of mystic contemplation called Yoga or "union of the individual and the cosmic." This philosophy was eloquently propagated in China by Hsuan-tsang, who is better known as the author of the "Memoirs of the Western Countries." Hsuan-tsang's Japanese disciples, including Dosho, transplanted the Hosso teaching to their native country and it became the scholastic theology of Japanese Buddhism in the Nara period. Anesaki characterizes the Hosso School in the eighth century as follows:

> The special feature of the Hosso school is its elaboration of the gradual stages in mystic contemplation, which are classified into ten. . . . Those who are well qualified in the exercise of contemplation and have achieved spiritual progress are entitled to share the glories of Tushita (Satiated), the celestial abode of the future Buddha Maitreya. Hence the aristocratic tendency of the Hosso school, the attainment of spiritual heights being the privilege of a select few. This trait of the Buddhism of the eight century had a close connection with the aristocratic regime of the time, and the alliance between the Buddhist prelates and the court nobles bore

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[1]Eliot, op. cit., pp. 212-213.

lamentable fruits in the corruption of Buddhism as a result of meddling of religion with politics.[1]

Some of the leaders of this school played important roles, both good and bad. In 698, Emperor Mommu had appointed priest Dosho as Daisozu or Archbishop.[2] Giyen (d. 728) prepared the way for philosophic thinking; though he himself left no writing we may trace to him the beginning of studies in logic, psychology, and metaphysics. The most eminent of Giyen's disciples, and one of the most controversial figures, was Gyogi (670-749). He was a philosopher and an activist. Gyogi persuaded the people to participate in social work by preaching Punya or "meritorious works."[3] He is credited with the teaching of "salvation by Amida," and he was supposed to have obtained the oracle from the Sun-goddess at Ise concerning the erection of the great statue of Buddha which became the national project under Emperor Shomu.[4] Another controversial figure was Gembo, head of the Northern Hosso, who was politically ambitious. He returned from China and was received at the court and was appointed the Sojo in charge of the Naidojo, or the chapel in the palace. He has been described as scheming and immoral, and after destroying the political career of Fujiwara Hirotsugu, the viceroy of Kyushu, Gembo himself was banished.[5] Other leaders of the Hosso school in the Nara period were Hokai,

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[1]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 96.

[2]De Visser, op. cit., II, 480-481.

[3]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 92.

[4]Reischauer, op. cit., p. 88.

[5]Eliot, op. cit., p. 220.

Gyoshin, Genjin, Jiho, Jikin, Zenju, Gomyo and Tokuichi. The last two, Gomyo and Tokuichi, became the spokesmen of the older Buddhist schools of Nara against Dengyo-daishi, the founder of Japanese Tendai School in the Heian-period.

Together with the Hosso School, the Kusha school[1] was introduced by Hosso priests to Japan, not as a separate institution but as a compendium of the Hosso. The Kusha school concerned itself with the study and exposition of the Abhidharma-kosa, which occupies in Buddhism a position somewhat similar to that of the Summa Theologica of Thomas Aquinas in the Roman Catholic Church.[2] The Japanese name of the school, Kusha, is an abbreviation of Abhidharma-kosa, the Book of Metaphysical Treasures written by Vasubandhu in the fifth century.[3] The Kusha doctrine has been studied by all other Buddhist schools in Japan. During the Nara period, a Hosso priest, Gomyo, was noted for his scholarship in the Kusha school.

The "Vinaya" or "Ritsu," the moral code of Buddhism, was known in Japan when Zenshinni, a nun, was sent by Soga no Umako to Korea in 588. She returned to Japan in 590, and is said to have received the Kairitsu or moral discipline while in Korea. In 678, Dokwo, a student priest, returned from China with some knowledge of the Vinaya. In 736, Dosen brought with him some writings of the Vinaya together with books of the Kegon School.

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 25-36; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 57-73; Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 226-232; Reichelt, op. cit., p. 332.

[2]Eliot, op. cit., p. 173.

[3]Taiken Kimura, Abidaruma-ron no Kenkyu (Tokyo: Meiji-shoin, 1937).

The Ritsu School[1] known in the Nara period was developed by Tao-hsuan in China in the seventh century. Eliot writes as follows about Tao-hsuan:

> He laid comparatively little stress on doctrine, but held that strict morality and discipline are the foundation and essence of the religious life. Eight of his works are included in the Tripitaka. . . . He also compiled a catalogue of the Tripitaka as it existed in his time. In matters of discipline he entirely followed Indian precedents and made the Dharmagupta Vinaya, commonly known as the Code in Four Sections, his chief authority; but still the idea of thus emphasizing the Vinaya seems to have originated in China and not to have been imitated from any Indian movement.[2]

Evidently, the Buddhists in Japan were not so much concerned with moral discipline as with the "validity of ordination." The centralization of the government from the time of Prince Shotoku had encouraged the stratification of the Buddhist hierarchy. Actually, there were two ordinations--that for the initiation of a novice receiving five disciplinary rules and that for a full qualification of priest receiving ten. These were formal ordinations performed by both Hinayana and Mahayana. (There is another informal self-vow ordination performed by the Mahayana only, which is set forth in the Brahma-jala sutra, and may be called a bodhisattva ordination. In the Nara period there was only the priest or bhikshu ordination, but during the Heian period Dengyo and Kobo initiated the bodhisattva ordination which was widely followed.)[3] Records reveal that previously in Japan there was some kind of informal ordination which was not the full ordination prescribed by

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[1]Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 185-191; Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 299-307; Reichelt, op. cit., p. 331.

[2]Eliot, op. cit., p. 174.

[3]Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 186-187.

the Ritsu school; the latter requires three Upadhyaya or Wajo (teachers) and seven witnesses as well as a valid "ordination hall" or Kaidan. In the reign of Shomu (724-748) two priests, Ei-ei and Fusho, went to China and asked the Upadhyaya Chien-chien--in Japanese, the Ganjin--to erect an ordination hall in Japan. At that time, the Chinese emperor, Hsuan-tsung, a follower of Taoism, was reluctant to allow an eminent Buddhist leader to leave China for Japan. After much difficulty, Ganjin arrived at Nara in 754 and promulgated the discipline of Dharmaguptiya or Shibunritsu (the Four- Division Tradition). Many members of the imperial family received the first ordination from Ganjin. In the Nara period, there were three ordination halls: Todaiji Temple, Nara; Saigoku-Kwanzeon-ji, Kyushu; and Yakushi-ji, Shimotsuke. In addition, a fourth one was built at Toshodai-ji near Nara. Among them Todaiji Kaidan enjoyed national prominence.[1] The earth with which the ordination hall at Todaiji was built is said to have been from Geta-vanavihara in India. The three stories of the "Sila terrace" represent the "three collective pure Silas or morality." In its tower, the images of Sakyamuni and Prabhutaratna (Taho in Japanese) are enshrined. If one takes the vow to practice the moral precepts in this ordination hall, he is said to keep the Sila-paramita or "perfection of morality." Although Ganjin trained many disciples--Hoshin, Shitaku, Gijo, Hosei--the chief defect of the Japanese Ritsu school was its preoccupation with external formality and lack of concern with moral discipline. Dengyo-daishi received ordination at Nara, but he later rejected it and established a

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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 288-293.

new bodhisattva ordination based on the Tendai school. Kobo-daishi erected an anointment hall at Toji temple, Kyoto.

The prominance of the Hosso School in the early Nara period was soon taken over by the Kegon School.[1] We should carefully examine the development of this school, which was proclaimed as the guiding principle of the nation in 749.

Kegon means a "wreath" or "garland" (Avatansaka in Sanskrit). It is the name of a sutra[2] concerning the mystic doctrine of the Buddha Mahavairocana, about whom more will be discussed in connection with the Shingon School. There are said to be six different texts of the sutra. The first, called "Constant Text," and the second, the "Great Text," have been kept by the power of the Dharani and are not written on palm leaves. The third, called "Higher Text," and the fourth, the "Middle Text," are preserved in the dragon palace in the ocean. The fifth, called "Lower Text," was secured by Ryu-ju Bosatsu or Bodhisattva Nagarjuna from the dragon palace and transmitted to India. The sixth, the "Abridged Text," has been translated into Chinese. The Kegon-kyo teaches that even at the top of one grain of dust there are innumerable Buddhas who are constantly preaching the Kegon doctrine. Sakyamuni taught only the Shinnyo or the truth. But his disciples were like the deaf and dumb and could not understand the Master's teaching, whereupon Sakyamuni taught the easy four Agamas (or discourses) and other doctrines.

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 58-73; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 108-125; Reichelt, op. cit., pp. 197-198.

[2]Nanjio, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

In India, the Avatansaka School did not exist as an independent school. Its development in China is described by Takakusu:

> Prior to the Kegon school there was in China a school named Ti-lun which was founded on Vasubandhu's commentary on the Dasa-bhumi Sutra. The text was translated into Chinese in 508-512 A.D. by Bodhiruci, Ratnamati and Buddha-santa, all from India.
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> There appeared in time a split in the Ti-lun School. Tao-Ch'ung, a pupil of Bodhiruci, lived in the north district . . . while Hui-kuang, a pupil of Ratnamati, lived in the south. . . . The line of the former was called 'the Branch of the Northern Path,' and that of the latter 'the Branch of the Southern Path.'
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> . . . .
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> At the outset the Northern Path seemed to have flourished. . . . But for some reason his successors did not succeed so well.
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> In the Southern Path . . . when Tu-shun, the nominal founder of the Kegon School, made appearance on the scene . . . the Tilun was finally united with the new rising school of the Huayen (Kegon, Avatansake, 'Wreath') philosophy. . . . But the third patriarch Fatsang (643-712) was the real founder of this school, for he was responsible for the final systematization of the philosophy. . . . One of Ta-tsang's pupils, Shen-hsuang [Jinjo] of Simla, came to Japan in the twelfth year of the Tempyo Era (A.D. 740) and lectured on the school. . . . Another pupil, Tao-hsuan, came to Japan in 730 and taught the doctrine. Bodhisena from Central India arrived in Nara at the same time or earlier (probably 726) and taught the Avatansaka doctrine.[1]

Traditionally, however, the first patriarch of the Kegon in Japan was regarded as Jinjo (Shen-hsiang), the second as Roben, the third Jitsu-chu; together with them, Emperor Shomu as the first patron and Tao-hsuan as a pioneer are venerated.[2] In 749, three days before his abdication, the Emperor Shomu issued an ordinance stating that the Kegon-kyo was the principal sutra. According to Shoku Nihongi, Shomu hoped that the Buddhas would protect him,

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[1]Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 109-112.

[2]Hiyane, op. cit., p. 298.

give him long life, and fulfill all his wishes, and that they would cause the Law to remain a long time in this world, save all living beings, give great peace to the empire, joy to the people, and ultimate Buddhahood to all sentient beings of the Dharma world.[1] The Kegon doctrine, more than the Hosso scholastic philosophy, appealed to the nationalistic dream of the Nara period. Anesaki states it as follows:

> In the scripture Kegon, the Buddha Sakya-muni or Lochana, is represented at the supreme moment of his great enlightenment. . . . As the book portrays the scene graphically, all celestial beings assemble about the "Seat of Enlightenment" (Bodhi-manda) in adoration of the "Supreme Enlightened," every one of them bringing with him his characteristic brilliance and glories, to be fused into the all-illumining radiance of Buddha himself. In other words, the whole cosmos here manifests a grand symphony of spiritual forces mutually pervasive and all joining in glorifying Buddha. Expressed in philosophical terms, every existence is a reality in itself with its own nature and activity; but these realities, though diverse in individual qualities, can perfect themselves by realizing their ultimate communion with the cosmic soul embodied in Buddha's person, and thereby make up the grand system of the universe. The aim of the Buddhist religion, according to the Kegon school, is to dispel the illusion of the separate ego and therefore to restore everyone's consciousness to fundamental communion with Buddha and through him with all other beings. We might call this religion a cosmotheism, and . . . its graphic representation of the cosmic life contributed much to the glorification of Buddha Lochana as represented in the Central Cathedral, where the scripture was repeatedly explained in lectures and sermons.[2]

The greatest monument of Buddhism in the Nara period was the colossal image of the Buddha Roshana or Lochana. It was probably inspired by Roben (689-773), a Kegon priest, a well-known writer and artist, and counsellor to Emperor Shomu in ecclesiastical matters. We noted previously the syncretistic attitude of Gyogi, a Hosso priest and the Archbishop appointed by Shomu, in

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[1]De Visser, op. cit., II, 578.

[2]Anesaki, op. cit., pp. 93-94.

connection with the erection of the Buddha statue. Emperor Shomu had a dream in which the Sun-goddess appeared to him and said: "The sun is Birushana. Understand this and execute your enterprise."[1] Shomu himself took part, carrying earth in his sleeves in order to help raise a platform necessary for the operations. In 749, gold was discovered in the province of Mutsu and a service of thanksgiving was held, in which the following edict was read: "This is the word of the sovereign who is the servant of the Three Treasurers that he humbly speaks before the image of Roshana." The discovery of gold was announced, and the edict states that the emperor received it as a gift bestowed upon him by the love and blessing of Roshana Buddha.[2] Indeed, Buddhism became the center of national life, involving politics, industry and art and all other resources, financial and human. Minor Shinto deities became incorporated into this national drama, and the god of Hachiman delivered an oracle promising that he would assist the construction of the Buddha statue. Imperial emissaries were sent to Usa Hachiman shrine to escort the deity to the capital of Nara. The great statue of Roshana Buddha was dedicated in 749 with due splendor and glory.[3] In 765, an edict was issued by the empress stating that she considered her duties were first to serve the Three Treasurers, next to worship the Shinto gods, and finally to cherish the people.[4] Thus one can see the tremendous importance of the Kegon school in the Nara period, but its destiny coincided with

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[1]Eliot, op. cit., p. 221. [2]Ibid., p. 222.

[3]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 90.

[4]Eliot, op. cit., p. 224.

the destiny of the central government. When the national economy could no longer support such a political structure, heavily burdened by the ecclesiastical structure, the government had to shift its national policy in regard to Buddhism. A thorough change was possible only when the capital was moved out of Nara, which was the center of Buddhist learning and institutions. After the removal of the capital from Nara in 784, the Kegon school declined, leaving behind the great monument of the colossal statue of Roshana Buddha which remains standing today.

CHAPTER IV

BACKGROUND AND LIFE OF KOBO-DAISHI

Background

Kobo-daishi was born in 774, exactly ten years before the capital was moved from Nara to Nagaoka. In 794, the capital was moved again from Nagaoka to Heian-kyo, the present Kyoto. Sansom observes three significant features of this period: the influence of Buddhism, the incessant intrigues of the Fujiwara and other great houses, and the wealth of some of the landholders.[1] The motivation behind the sudden change in location of the capital must have been mixed. Reischauer gives credit to the personality of Emperor Kwammu: "He must have been a man of daring and originality, for it was he who cut the Gordian knot of the political tangle of his day by simply abandoning Nara to the Buddhists and their schemes and setting up his capitol first at Nagaoka and then at . . . the present Kyoto."[2] But it must have taken more than one emperor's determination to execute such a drastic change. Anesaki states:

> The tide turned in the removal of the capital. . . . This was a bold step on the part of the political reformers, because it was bound to encounter strong resistance from political conservatives as well as from the ecclesiastical aris-

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[1]Sansom, op. cit., p. 186.

[2]A. K. Reischauer, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

> tocracy who were in favour of Nara as the time-honoured centre of national life. But the step was taken in spite of the opposition, particularly because freedom from the interference of the ecclesiastical dignitaries was necessary for political regeneration. A parallel reform in religion was carried out by the two great leaders. . . .[1]

As stated before, the Buddhist hierarchy acquired power and wealth which surpassed that of civil officials who developed into a new class of nobles toward the end of the Nara period. The most conspicuous among the new aristocrats was the Fujiwara family. It may well be that the change of capital is an indication of an attempt by the new aristocracy to establish an oligarchy in a new locality free from the established ecclesiastical aristocracy of Nara. In this connection, the question was not "Buddhism or not" but rather "what kind of Buddhism?" The new aristocracy felt the need of Buddhism but not the established schools such as the Hosso and the Kegon. New Buddhist schools, the Tendai and the Shingon, allied with the oligarchy.

The complex character of the political situation--the intrigues of the nobility and the lack of power of the emperors--is well illustrated by several incidents. Fujiwara Tanetsugu, the leading promotor of political reform, was related to the rich Hata family and it is possible that he obtained money from them in return for some kind of promise. At any rate, Tanetsugu decided political matters for Emperor Kwammu. Kwammu's brother, Sawara, was the heir-apparent and he depended heavily on Saegi Imagehito (who was probably related to the family of Kobo-daishi). The balance of power between the two parties--Fujiwara Tanetsugu and Emperor Kwammu versus Crown Prince Sawara and Saegi Imagehito--was broken

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[1] Anesaki, op. cit., p. 107.

when Tanetsugu banished Imagehito. In 784, a commission under Tanetsugu began construction of the new capital. In 785, in the midst of construction, Prince Sawara assassinated Tanetsugu. Sawara and his men were banished and the prince was driven to Awaji island where he was murdered. Kwammu's son became the crown prince and later became Emperor Heijo.[1]

Emperor Heijo appointed his own brother Prince Kanno (later Emperor Saga) as heir-apparent. Emperor Heijo became involved with Lady Kusuriko, the daughter of Fujiwara Tanetsugu (who was assassinated by Prince Sawara); though it was Lady Kusuriko's daughter who was Emperor Heijo's concubine, her mother charmed Heijo and exercised political power through the emperor together with her brother, Fujiwara Nakanari. Lady Kusuriko and her brother Nakanari persuaded Emperor Heijo to banish Prince Iyo under suspicion of rebellion. Prince Iyo and his mother were imprisoned in Kawara-dera (temple) and committed suicide, and the prince's tutor, Ato Otari (Kobo-daishi's uncle), fled to Shikoku island.[2]

When Emperor Heijo abdicated in 809 and Saga occupied the throne, Heijo's son, Prince Takaoka, became the heir-apparent. Lady Kusuriko and her brother Nakanari, who lost political power with the abdication of Heijo, persuaded Heijo to attempt to return to the throne. Heijo's party made Nara their headquarters and gathered arms. Emperor Saga's party tried to banish Nakanari to Sado island and undermine Heijo's ambition. Some of the local chieftains, including the powerful Abe no Kiyotsugu, collaborated with Heijo's

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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 376-379.

[2]Royei Matsumoto, Kobo, Shinran, Nichiren (Tokyo, Matsumoto Shokai, 1920), pp. 150-152.

party. Sakanouye no Tamuramaro, who was in charge of military affairs was tempted to join Heijo's party, but was persuaded to stay with the emperor's army. Emperor Saga secured the support of Kobo-daishi, who held a Shingon votive service for the purpose of Hoso-chokyu, Kokudo-an-on, or "prolongation of the throne and the safety of the nation." Ex-emperor Heijo attempted to lead his army to the eastern province but failed. Lady Kusuriko committed suicide and her brother Nakanari was killed. Heijo repented his action and decided to dedicate the rest of his life to Buddhism, and his son, the Crown Prince Takaoka, became Kobo-daishi's disciple and later attempted to visit India (but on his way he died).[1]

In the midst of political instability and financial difficulties, the second removal of the capital--from Nagaoka to Kyoto--is surprising. There is no coherent account of why it was carried out; scattered reports of divinations, superstitions and legends give us some clues. Syncretistic trends were evident when the site of Nagaoka was selected. Fujiwara Tanetsugu, the chief of the commission for the erection of the new capital, was assisted by a Shinto priest and a Taoist practicioner.[2] As mentioned earlier, in the midst of the construction of the capital at Nagaoka, Tanetsugu was assassinated by Prince Sawara. After the death of Sawara at Awaji island, ill-fortune overtook the imperial family. Emperor Kwammu, who was educated as a student of Confucianism before he took the crown, decided to offer sacrifice to the souls of the imperial ancestors.[3] But ill-fortune continued and the em-

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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 379-381; Matsumoto, op. cit., pp. 150-157.

[2]Hiyane, op. cit., p. 345. [3]Ibid., pp. 345-346.

peror's son, the crown prince, became ill. Gifts and prayers were offered at the shrine of Ise and other localities, but the prince did not get well. The deities are said to have attributed this to the vengeful spirit of the dead prince Sawara. So the imperial messengers were sent to Awaji island, where Sawara died, to make humble apologies to the vengeful spirit. The Fujiwara family, who was instrumental in the death of Sawara, was fear-stricken. The consort of the crown prince, Fujiwara Obiko, suddenly died and this was also ascribed to the vengeful spirit of Sawara. The Fujiwara sent two Buddhist priests to Awaji and offered Kongo-hannya-sutra to pacify the dead spirit. Posthumously, Sawara was made Emperor Sudo, and more Shinto priests, Taoist practioners, and Buddhist priests were solicited to pray for him. (When Emperor Kwammu became ill in 806, he issued an edict proclaming that all those who had been banished for taking part in the conspiracy of 785 should, "whether alive or dead," be released and restored to their former ranks, and that the priests of all provincial temples or Kokubunji should recite the Kongo-hannya-sutra, commonly known as Diamond Cutter, twice a year on behalf of the Emperor Sudo.[1]) Such was the atmosphere in which the removal of the capital from Nagaoka to Kyoto was undertaken. In accord with the advice of geomancers, who incidentally played a significant role since the early Heian-era, Kyoto was selected as the new site and reported to the deity of Ise and the local deity of Kamo. The new capital was modeled after the Chinese capital and it was called Heian-kyo or the capital of Peace and Tranquility. Even today the remains of

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[1]Sansom, op. cit., p. 188.

the old capital at Kyoto indicate the beauty and splendor of the original city with the palace, ceremonial halls, government buildings, and the university.

From the standpoint of religious practice, the early Heian period revealed a conglomeration of Shinto, Taoism, and Buddhism as well as Confucianism. Education was based on Confucian teachings in the university where the veneration of Confucius was regularly observed. The Shinto cult developed elaborate services for the Dead, and divination, which was partly native and partly Chinese importation, became an important function of the government. Taoist practioners influenced people of various social strata, and Buddhist priests were often found guilty of sorcery. Two Shinto priestly families, the Nakatomi and the Imbe, fought for monopoly of certain governmental positions until it was decreed that the court functions were to be divided between the two families equally.[1] The government often had to control the ceaseless abuses of religious rites and practices. Sansom writes:

> Abuses among sorcerers and diviners and priests claiming magic powers, were so flagrant that in 807 an edict was issued in the following terms: "Priests, diviners and the like take advantage of the common people by wantonly interpreting good and evil omens. The people in their ignorance put faith in their predictions, so that gradually false cults come to flourish and evil magic to prosper. Such customs gather strength and impair simple habits. They are henceforth strictly forbidden and all persons studying these arts, or continuing to practise them, will be banished." . . . Extravagant expenditure upon religious rites, particularly on Buddhist masses for the dead, reached such a point that, in the same year as the above proclamation against necromancers, an imperial edict set limits to the amount of offerings which might be made to temples in payment for such masses.
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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 349-350.

> Prayers for good weather for the crops, prayers to avert or to stop pestilence, are recorded in the chronicles almost as part of the business of government. So, in 818, after a succession of bad harvests, we find the Emperor and his court fasting and praying for three days. All officials are put on short rations and reduced pay, but the priests, whenever they are called upon to pray for rain or for sunshine, receive rich gifts; so rich that taking only the amounts mentioned in the official histories of this period, their total in about three years amounted to over 100,000 bolts of cotton cloth, exclusive of other offerings. With sickness it is the same. Disease is regarded as due to the influence of the spirit of another person, living or dead, and the first essential is to drive out or pacify that spirit, by the help of priests or exorcists.
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> As to omens . . . they were of such importance that to record them was one of the main functions of official chronicles. . . . As time progressed it became the habit, if not the duty, of provincial officials to report to the throne anything in the nature of an omen, so that the court diviners could be summoned to interpret and advise. Uncommon birds flying over a house, curious noises, clouds of unusual shape or colour, animals with strange markings, any of these might demand serious study, and, according to the verdict of the diviners, prayers and litanies, offerings to temples, messengers to distant shrines. Happy the provincial official who could report from his post a happy omen, such as that cloud of five colours which once appeared and was regarded as so auspicious that presents were made to "the hundred functionaries" and an amnesty granted to all criminals.[1]

Shinto cults were greatly influenced by Chinese practices. The sacrifice of oxen, according to the Shoku-Nihongi, was known in the districts of Ise, Owari, Omi, Mino, Wakasa, Echizen, and Kii, but this local development was forbidden after Buddhism penetrated. The worship of t'ien or heaven, which was a common form of worship among the Chinese, was adopted, and prayers for heaven were recited in the imperial tombs. Some of the Shinto shrines built in this period were dedicated to the ancestors of the immigrant families; the Taiheki shrine at Uzumasa, Kyoto and the Keiman shrine at Ashiwara were dedicated to the ancestors of the Hata (Chinese) family and the Shirahige shrine in Musashi was dedicated

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[1]Sansom, op. cit., pp. 188-190.

to a Korean pioneer.[1] Some of the Chinese folk religious practices influenced Buddhism, especially the veneration of the Pole Star as Bodhisattva Myoken which became a popular cult with the rise of the Shingon school. Repeated edicts forbidding the annual celebration connected with Pole Star, accompanied by public immorality, illustrate the extent to which various religious beliefs and superstitions became part of everyday life. Occult Taoism, the On-yo-do or the Way of Yin and Yang penetrated both Shinto and Buddhism, and Yin-yang practioners were called upon at the time of pestilence or selection of the heir-apparent.[2] Significant was the official adoption of the Taoistic calendar under the leadership of Manomaru instead of the Confucian calendar which was used for some time.

From the Nara period, the Daigaku or university was an institution to educate the children of government officials and court families. Although the curriculum was based on Confucian study, education in the early Heian period became formal and traditional. Confucian etiquette was no longer a novelty; it was practiced rigidly in court circles. In this period, more attention was given to Chinese poetry, and a number of commentaries and anthologies were written. History also became a fad and the Shoku Nihongi and other national chronicles were compiled. Since the government administration was more or less in the hands of the Fujiwara oligarchy, court circles were preoccupied with literature and art, especially after the reign of Emperor Saga, who himself was learned. He was surrounded by men of the arts--Kobo-daishi, Nanyen Eika, Asano

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[1] Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 396-401.

[2] Ibid., p. 396.

Katori, Sugawara Seiko. Saga initiated the "Water Banquet" and "Flower Banquet" and invited men of learning who composed poems and played Gigaku or the court music. It is not surprising to learn that Mannyo-shu or a collection of ancient poems was compiled in this period. Saga's adviser, Fujiwara Fuyutsugu, established the Kwangakuin, a school for the children of the Fujiwara family, and Kobo-daishi another school as we shall discuss later. Literature began to develop through the phonetic use of Chinese characters. During this period, Kobo-daishi is said to have simplified this system of writing into the present Hirakana. Among court circles prose soon became the fashion, and in the middle and later Heian period prose made a tremendous advancement. Serious religious writings appeared during this period, but we shall consider them later in connection with Dengyo-daishi and Kobo-daishi.

If life in court circles during this period was anything like what is described in The Tale of Genji[1]--elegant, graceful and sophisticated--national life was threatened by constant danger, including minor revolts concerning the throne. The significant events in the early Heian period were the threats of the unincorporated tribes in the northern provinces. Although the official chronicles indiscriminately call them Emishi, the common term for Ainu, among them were actually many members of the Yamato tribes who had migrated to the northern districts for various reasons. From the Taika to the Nara period, the prestige of the Yamato court gradually expanded, and many frontier settlers, who hitherto had

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[1]Lady Murasaki, The Tale of Genji, trans. Arthur Waley (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1935).

not been integrated into national life, began to come under the influence of the central government. But the decline of governmental control during the Nara period, with only nominal garrisons stationed in frontiers, enabled the "Emishi" to rebell against civil officials in the northern districts. From the latter part of the Nara period several attempts were made to improve the defense program, but the defense forces were not disciplined and the local officials were preoccupied with their own interests. Emperor Kwammu appointed Ki no Kosami to the post of military commander, and in 789 the imperial forces led by Kosami experienced total defeat. After this failure, the defense program was reexamined and Otomo Otamaro, the new commander, assisted by able Sakanouye no Tamuramaro, led expeditions. Otamaro was given the title of Seiyi-tai-shogun (subjugating-barbarians great general), which was later inherited by the Feudal Ruler. In 802, Tamuramaro advanced his fortress to Izawa and pacified the tribes in the neighborhood. But keeping up such a military force meant high taxation for the people. The national treasury, after spending large sums for the construction of capitals and religious institutions, could hardly support such a military program.

One of the features of the early Heian period was the revision of the state organization. Before the new aristocracy moved the capital from Nara, the policy makers recognized that the national economy and political structure of the Nara period were at a low ebb. Under the leadership of the Fujiwara family, the Heian court was reorganized with a Kwampaku or Regent, the Kurado or Archivists, the Kebishi or Police Commissioners, and the Kage-

yushi or Audit Officers.[1] Although the Heian policy makers were partly successful in escaping from the tyranny of the established Buddhist hierarchy of Nara, the Heian governmental structure was overweighted with the members of several aristocratic families and the new Buddhist schools--the Tendai and the Shingon. New noblemen collaborated with provincial and district governors, and the appointment of the posts became titular. In reality, this was a return to the pre-Taika reform days when several clan leaders enjoyed full autonomy. The most powerful among the noble class was the Fujiwara; the Abe, the Miyoshi, the Wake, and others followed. With the rise of these families who monopolized political appointments to local titular posts, the autonomous manors increased and the national income decreased. In the early Heian period the power of the warriors was not well established, except in certain cases such as Sakanouye no Tamuramaro. By and large the military positions were decorative and hereditary. But the strength of the Buddhist and Shinto hierarchy could not be overlooked. Their manors, called Jisha Shoen, were equally wealthy and autonomous. The gradual growth of the Jisha Shoen has already been discussed in connection with the Nara period. But during the Heian period, the Tendai and the Shingon schools entered the scene. Their role in the already complex political, economic, and social structure of the early Heian period will be discussed later.

Sansom states that the Japanese of the Heian period tended to treat each element of the culture which was imported from China as if it were something integral and perfected, yet their temper

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[1]Sansom, op. cit., pp. 204-213.

and their circumstances modified its parts and changed its very essence.

> This is why much of the Heian culture seems to us thin and unreal. It was a product of literature rather than of life. So the terms of Indian metaphysics became a kind of fashionable jargon, Buddhist rites a spectacle, Chinese poetry an intellectual game. We might almost summarize by saying that religion became an art and art a religion. Certainly what most occupied the thoughts of the Heian courtiers were ceremonies, costumes, elegant pastimes like verse-making and amorous intrigue conducted according to rules. . . . Let it be added that, if they transformed whatever they borrowed and sometimes refined away its essence, they and their descendants also rejected what was gross and cruel. Under the kindly Japanese touch the terrifying deities and demons of Chinese mythology become merely amiable grotesques, the harsh Confucian code is softened, the grim Indian ascetic mortifying the flesh is transmuted on Japanese soil into an abstemious recluse enjoying books and flowers.[1]

Although Sansom's statement is obviously an oversimplified characterization, it indicates that Japan as a nation matured greatly in the Heian period. The cultural, political, economic, and social structure during the early Heian epoch was more complex than ever before, and national life centered around aristocratic families and landholders. The religious development in this age reflected this ethos.

Dengyo-daishi, a Senior Contemporary of Kobo

In the early Heian period a new system of teaching and practice, a higher synthesis, was demanded. Two prominent men appeared to achieve this task--each in his own way. They were men of different types, but common to both were the aim of establishing a united center of Japanese Buddhism and the policy of securing support from the aristocracy which formulated national policy.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 239.

They tried to derive knowledge from China directly rather than accepting what was known by the six established Buddhist schools of the Nara period. Both of them emphasized ceremonies and mysteries. They were Saicho and Kukai, better known by their posthumous names, Dengyo-daishi and Kobo-daishi, and their teachings and organizations were to dominate the religious and social life of the coming centuries. Both of them dreamed of a grand union of church and state, and they were concerned with all phases of national life. They were closely identified with the oligarchy which ruled the country through the throne, but at the same time they were sensitive to the religious and other needs of the people of lower social strata. Their religious convictions made it possible for Dengyo and Kobo to transcend their immediate surroundings, yet they were both children of their age. The fortune and fate of the aristocracy and the Buddhist hierarchy were intertwined, and all movements of the time were manifestations of the powerful political and ecclesiastical scheme of centralization.[1]

It is important to follow the life of Dengyo-daishi in order to understand his teaching and ideals. In a sense, he was the initiator of the two, while Kobo was a systematizer. Dengyo-daishi[2] was known in his lifetime by his ordained name, Saicho, and was born in 767 in a village called Mitsu no Ura in the district of Omi (the present Shiga prefecture). His parents were descendants of a well-known Chinese family who migrated to Japan

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[1]Anesaki, _op. cit._, pp. 109-110.

[2]Isao Yamamoto, _Dengyo-daishi_ (Tokyo: Heibon-sha, 1935); Kaneko, _op. cit._, Anesaki, _op. cit._, pp. 111-122; Eliot, _op. cit._, pp. 233-253.

during the fourth century and had been settled in Omi for generations. When Saicho was born, Empress Shotoku and priest Dokyo ruled the Yamato court, and the prestige of the centralized government had begun to decline. Saicho was educated in a pious family and was trained in the Yin-yang school, medicine, and art in his childhood. At twelve he was sent to the Kokubunji in his province and was exposed to the Sanron teaching. At fourteen he became the disciple of Abbot Gyohyo of Daian-ji and was given the name of Saicho. Gyohyo was then the Daikokushi or the head priest of Omi and was quite influential. Saicho was taught Hosso and Kegon sutras and Kishin-ron or Awakening of Faith. When he was nineteen or twenty he was ordained at Todai-ji Kaidan. He was not satisfied with the established Buddhist institutions at Nara and left the capital. Saicho became a hermit and led a devotional life at Mount Hiei, near his home. This action of Saicho was motivated by his religious experience as we may observe in his Gwan-bun or vow.[1] His vow may be discussed under three headings. First, Saicho came to the realization that this world is full of suffering. He wished he were born during the lifetime of Buddha Sakyamuni, and already in this connection Saicho hinted that his time was the Mappo or the latter day. Saicho was impatient in his search for the saving knowledge and he was convinced that the answer was to be found in Zen or "doing good," but he asked searching questions about the relationship between "doing good" and karma or "causation." On the one hand, Saicho was fully aware that life was nothing but suffering, but on the other hand, he was confident

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[1]Yamamoto, op. cit., pp. 3-5.

that there must be a way to transcend the life of suffering. The search for the answer drove him to the life of a hermit. Second, Saicho examined the life of the priesthood. He observed that the monks took it for granted that they should live on the charity of the laity. But Saicho took the life of the priesthood seriously. To him it was not the external aspect of "leaving the world" (for the priesthood) that was important, but the spiritual attitude. In this connection, he recalled the legendary story of Lady Mari, who in a previous life was married to a Brahmin. She lost her husband and they had no children. This suffering and loneliness opened her eyes to the Buddhist faith and she became devoted to Dharma. At that time there were five priests who did not observe discipline, and they deceived the poor widow and exploited her willingness to give charity. According to the Karma, the widow was born again as the empress Mari, while the priests were born as slaves carrying Lady Mari's chair. This simple legend struck Saicho as he observed the corruption and immorality common among the established temples and monastaries at Nara. Furthermore, Saicho felt that he too was guilty, being part of the general atmosphere of his day. Third, Saicho was very conscious of having betrayed the Buddhas, the imperial rule, and filial piety, and he made a vow not to leave the mountain until he obtained the saving faith. To him, "leaving the world" was ultimately to "benefit the world."[1] Thus, he prayed, studied, meditated, and contemplated. In the intervals between these exercises, he tilled the earth, and when he could not do this, he spent his time carving a statue of

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[1]Kaneko, op. cit., pp. 5-14.

Yaku-O (Bhaishajyaraja), which he set up in his little chapel.[1] Saicho's vow or Gwan-bun became known to Juko, a high official in the court. While he stayed in his cell at Mount Hiei, he came across three great works of Chi-i (531-597), the great master of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai (Tendai in Japanese) school. Gradually Saicho became known among the serious-minded young Buddhists, and in the course of time he established a small center of training at Mount Hiei. According to the tradition of Hiei-zan, Saicho was particularly attracted by the Mantra element of Tendai practice.[2] Saicho was supported by many aristocrats who were dissatisfied with the established schools. On his part, he actively supported the political and religious reforms which the early Heian aristocrats envisaged. Saicho regarded his temple, Komponchudo, at Mount Hiei as the guardian temple of the new capital. His friend Juko, a high government official, was instrumental in the visit of Emperor Kwammu to Mount Hiei in 794. Shortly after the erection of the capital at Kyoto, Saicho was invited to have a seat in the court, and it was decreed that all the expenses of his monastery were to be paid from the taxes of the district of Omi. In 798 he gave ten public lectures on the Lotus doctrine, and in 801 he invited ten leading priests from the seven important temples of Nara to share the doctrine of the Lotus. In 802 Saicho's aristocratic friends, Wake Hiroyo and Matsuna, made it possible for him to give a public lecture at Takaosan-temple. (In this instance, Kobo-daishi's teacher, Gonso, was also invited.) Anesaki writes:

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[1]Arthur Lloyd, The Creed of Half Japan (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1911), p. 229.

[2]Keishitsu, op. cit., p. 58.

In about twenty years after his retirement into the mountains, Saicho achieved a great deal in developing his monastic institutions and thereby in establishing a new centre of Buddhism in co-ordination with the new political centre. Numerous sanctuaries and colleges were built, then and later, on the slopes and in the valleys of Mount Hiei, and the whole institution was officially declared to be the "Chief Seat of the Buddhist Religion for Ensuring the Security of the Country" (Chingo-kokka no Dojo), this implying, on the part of the Government, the rejection of the old centre of Buddhism in Nara as such.[1]

Saicho's friend, Wake Hiroyo, who shared Saicho's ambition to unify all Buddhist schools under Mount Hiei, the headquarters of Saicho, arranged to send Saicho to China for further study. As yet, the Tendai was not recognized as a school of Buddhism in Japan. There is a slight discrepancy in dates among several authorities as to when Saicho left Japan (802 or 804);[2] at any rate, he accompanied Fujiwara Kadomaro, Japanese envoy to the court of T'ang. Storms delayed the party and it took them nearly a year to reach the Chinese capital. Saicho was assisted by an interpreter, Gishin; otherwise he had to communicate with Chinese priests in writing. Nevertheless, he went to the monastery of the T'ien-t'ai school in the province of Chekiang. Since he stayed in China little more than year, and with a language handicap, it was humanly impossible for Saicho to have mastered all the doctrines he is said to have studied. Rather, his visit to China was more for the sake of "gathering sutras and materials which are necessary for the performance of ceremonies."[3] In fact, Saicho is said to have brought over 2,304 volumes of sutras and commentaries to Japan.

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[1]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 112.

[2]Lloyd, op. cit., p. 231.

[3]Keishitsu, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

Anticipating the establishment of the Tendai as a recognized school in Japan, Saicho must have studied the organizational and institutional aspects of the main monastery of the T'ien-T'ai. While in China, he received the boddhisattva ordination from Tao-sui, the mystic Mantra doctrines from Shun-chiao, and the secret of Zen meditation from Hsiu-jan. His main interest was to perfect his own Tendai system by the acquisition of proper authority under the Vinaya. Having completed his mission, he returned with the envoy, and resumed his position as the abbott at Mount Hiei.

The aristocratic leaders in the Heian court welcomed Saicho's return, and Wake Hiroyo ordered the court librarians to copy many of the sutras brought back by Saicho. In 805, the Heian court selected from the Sanron and Hosso schools six priests--Dosho, Juson, Shuyen, Gonso, Jion, and Jikwan--to visit Mount Hiei and be initiated into Tendai teaching. Furthermore, many pictures of Birushana (Roshana) and Mandara were ordered to be painted at government expense. Wake Hiroyo persuaded eight prominent priests of the old established schools to receive abhiseka (Kwanjo) or ordination from Saicho at Takaosan-temple.[1] In 806, Saicho requested the court to add the Tendai school to the list of the established Buddhist schools. The death in 806, of Emperor Kwammu, who supported Saicho's program, drove Saicho closer to Kukai (Kobo-daishi) who evidently was well established among the aristocratic circles by that time. Saicho made it a point to cooperate with Kukai. Sansom writes:

> . . . we may allude to certain correspondence of Kukai which has happily been preserved. It shows that Saicho respected him greatly, asked him for instruction in the Shingon doctrines,

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[1]Yamamoto, op. cit., pp. 476-477.

> and was with several followers baptised by him. Kukai on his side wrote to Saicho, begging him to come and discuss how best they could promote the faith. They exchanged books, and were clearly on friendly terms; but they seem to have been estranged through the desertion of some of Saicho's most cherished disciples, who left him and went over to the Shingon sect. There is a touching letter from Saicho to one of these converts, in which occur words like these: "We were baptised together. In company we have sought the Truth, in unison we have hoped for Grace. Why now have you turned your back upon the Original Vow and left me for so long? It is the way of the world to reject the worse and take the better, but how can there be worse and better as between the doctrine of the Tendai and the doctrine of the Shingon? For good friends, Truth is one and Love is one. . . . Let us live together and die together. Let us travel in company all over Japan, sowing the seeds of virtue, and then retire to Mount Hiei and await fulfilment of our purpose, careless of fame. This is my deep desire." But the disciple replied in a letter written for him by Kukai, that there was a difference between the two doctrines. He begged his old master's forbearance, but he must now remain an adherent of the Shingon sect.[1]

There is some controversy as to how serious this estrangement between Saicho and Kukai was. Questions have been raised as to whether it was based on doctrinal difference or personality clash. Probably both were true. And yet, the Shingon and the Tendai schools were closely identified in the early Heian period, and there was no open hostility between them. The Tendai was eclectic and was able to agree with the Shingon on many points of doctrine. Thus, while holding the Lotus-sutra and the person of Sakyamuni in the utmost reverence, it did not hesitate to recognize Vairocana as representing the Dharmakaya. And the Shingon tended to become equally tolerant and comprehensive in practice. Its fundamental doctrine of a great cosmic force which displays itself in many manifestations was not likely to raise objections to the inclusion of any personage in its already numerous pantheon or to

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[1]Sansom, op. cit., pp. 229-230.

make difficulties about any rites which might be considered specially appropriate in his worship.[1] Both of them, in their different ways, attempted to establish national centers of Buddhism. In their mutual opposition to the old established schools at Nara they were united (though Kukai was more diplomatic than Saicho in this respect), but ultimately they could not be completely identified.[2]

Saicho's struggle throughout his life was twofold. One was his opposition to the Hosso doctrine, which was the standard theology of the Nara period. The Hosso emphasized hierachical degrees of spiritual attainment both in theory and practice, and the result was an aristocratic religion as manifested in the Nara period. Doctrinally, the Hosso excluded from Buddhist perfection the type of mind which could be content with mere contemplation. This may be contrasted with the main tenet of the Tendai, which emphasized the universality of salvation or the attainment of Buddhahood.[3] Saicho was attacked by many learned priests in Nara, particularly by a Hosso priest, Tokuichi. Saicho wrote the Hokke-shuku or the "Book to explain the Superiority of the Lotus"[4] defending the Tendai doctrine.

The second struggle of Saicho was in connection with the establishment of the Tendai ordination. The fundamental maxim of Tendai ethics was "to put on the robes of the Tathagata, to occupy

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[1]Eliot, op. cit., pp. 239-240.

[2]Kaneko, op. cit., pp. 23-28.

[3]Anesaki, op. cit., pp. 112-113.

[4]Yamamoto, op. cit., pp. 7-156.

the seat of the Tathagata, and to enter the abode of the Tathagata," in short, to live the life of the universal self. Saicho taught that advance in moral life "in imitation of the Tathagata" was possible only through initiation into the mystery of the fundamental oneness of life. The mystery consists in taking vows in the presence of all the Buddhist saints. This was a modified form of Upasampada or ordination, which consisted in expressing faith in the Three Treasures and taking the vow of observing the commandments. This ordination or initiation was taught to secure the awakening and abiding of the fundamental Buddha-nature.[1] He held one such ordination in 807, and it was called Ichijotai-kai or "initiation according to Ekayana," which was believed by the Tendai to represent the "one-vehicle" or Ekayana, as opposed to the teachings of the Sarvastivada and other schools of the Vinaya. But until 818 Saicho recognized the traditional ordination as valid. Between 806 and 818 twenty-four disciples took the vow at the monastery on Mount Hiei, but fourteen of these deserted Saicho and joined the old schools at Nara. We can cite reasons for the desertion of his disciples. They were required to receive ordination at the nationally recognized Kaidan or "ordination halls" and the most prominent Kaidan was at the Todaiji, Nara, and the center of Buddhist learning was still at the old capital in spite of the popularity of Saicho at Mount Hiei. Furthermore, the discipline and practice at Mount Hiei were much stricter than at the Nara monasteries, and many of Saicho's disciples could not comprehend what their master was attempting to accomplish. Saicho

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[1]Anesaki, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

felt the need of systematizing the principles behind the Tendai movement; hence his publication of Sange-gakusho-shiki or "Educational principle of the Sangha."[1] He also felt the need of establishing an independent "Kaidan" or ordination hall, and in 818 he openly called for the abolition of the traditional ordination.

In his Sange-gakusho-shiki, Saicho expounded his basic educational and monastic principles. He aimed to keep novices or students for twelve years in his monastic school. (Earlier, Saicho allowed priests from Nara to stay for shorter periods in order to study the Tendai doctrine, but most of them did not grasp the doctrine. Even his own students deserted Mount Hiei and chose easier discipline.) Saicho did not question the brilliance of applicants; he required the spirit to follow the way or Do-shin. (This emphasis should be compared with the educational principle of Kobo-daishi, who was inclined to emphasize knowledge.) The purpose of monastic education was to nurture men with religious motivation for the sake of the nation. This, to Saicho, was the Mahayanistic principle. To benefit others, rather than to save oneself, was the Bodhisattvahood. But in order to benefit others, one had to learn the teachings of Mahayana sutras, which alone would save the nation and deliver people from suffering. When this Mahayana spirit influenced government officials, they would be faithful in taxation and the execution of other duties. But the guiding principle of the nation must be nourished in the monastic school. Saicho's general requirements for students included the Bodhisattva ordination and twelve years spent in meditation, recitation of

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[1]Yamamoto, op. cit., pp. 165-172.

sutras, and discipline. (He quoted a Mantra sutra which taught that twelve years of Mantra discipline would produce merit.) Thus, Saicho did not depend on mere knowledge or brilliance, but on religious motivation and Mantra practice. He allowed freedom of inquiry within the framework of the ekayana or the one vehicle, which tried to unify Mantrayana, Meditation, and Discipline under the Lotus doctrine.[1] (This accounts for the fact that several independent schools later developed out of Mount Hiei.) The underlying purpose of Saicho was to found a center of national religion (including Shinto) closely connected with the throne, which had been regarded as the guardian of all religious schools. Implicitly, if not explicitly, Saicho viewed the nation roughly in two divisions--the political administration of which the Fujiwara oligarchy was in charge, and religion and other cultural aspects of which the national church was in charge. As it developed, Saicho's monastic school became the center of learning and the study of art.[2] All this secured for Saicho more independence from the old ecclesiastical organization of Nara, and Mount Hiei assumed leadership in religious and cultural affairs. Furthermore, the Tendai hierarchy later came to control even state affairs. After Saicho's death, this highly protected church organization became the source of many evils, though it also proved to be the fountain-head of Buddhist discipline and learning.[3] But before the Tendai school became such a strong religious institution, Saicho struggled with

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[1]Kaneko, op. cit., pp. 34-42.

[2]Eliot, op. cit., p. 324.

[3]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 112.

the old schools over the matter of ordination.

Having thus systematized his basic principles of the monastic school as a national institution, Saicho in 818 asked the government for an authorization to institute an independent seat of ordination at Mount Hiei. The prelates in Nara under the leadership of Gomyo presented to the government a joint protest, and Keishin of Todaiji wrote the Meiho-jisho-ron or "Correction of False doctrine," pointing out twenty-eight errors of Saicho. Although Saicho defended his position doctrinally, he knew the real issue was more political than theological. The prelates at Nara were determined not to give up their monopoly of the right of ordination, while Saicho was equally determined to establish an ordination hall at Mount Hiei. The court was sympathetically disposed to Saicho, but the government could not afford to antagonize the Buddhist powers at Nara. The disputes continued and the last few years of Saicho's life were devoted to vehement polemics, which seem to have injured his health, as he died in 822. Saicho's best written work, the Kenkai-ron[1] or the "Defense of Mahayana Ordination," was written to combat the doctrinal attack of the established schools. His struggle as a pioneer of a new Buddhist movement had not been in vain. When his death put an end to his strenuous efforts, the government granted its consent to the establishment of the Kaidan as he had planned. The opposition from Nara never entirely ceased, but the life of the reformer left a triumphant afterglow which, far from fading, grew in brilliance.[2] Shortly before

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[1]Yamamoto, op. cit., pp. 173-346.

[2]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 120.

his (Saicho's) death Emperor Saga conferred on him the title of Dento-dai-hoshi, and forty-five years after his death Emperor Seiwa conferred the title of "Dengyo-daishi."

In viewing the achievement of Saicho we cannot but be impressed by his far-reaching vision. He travelled to many parts of Japan, from Kyushu island to the eastern province. His whole life was dedicated to the establishment of a new national religion, based on the Lotus doctrine. His understanding of Tendai teaching was eclectic and he allowed Shinto elements within his system. He lectured on the Lotus at Jinguji or Usa Hachiman shrine.[1] His syncretistic tendency was manifested when, in selecting the site of the future Enryakuji, he was careful to enter into good relations with the Shinto deity who was regarded as Sanno or "king of the mountain." This trend of Saicho was handed down in the Tendai school and was accentuated by the strong Shingon influence on later Tendai priests. A couple of centuries after Saicho's death, Gyoyen, a priest of Miidera, saw a profound meaning in the two Chinese characters of Sanno and interpreted them as the "One Truth Shinto of the Mountain God." This theory was called Sanno Ichijitsu Shinto, according to which a Shinto deity, like the Buddha of the Tendai school, represents the affirmations and negations of the phenomenal world and their synthesis in a higher unity.[2] To what extent Saicho in his life time had anticipated this later amalgamation of Shinto and Buddhism is debatable. We may infer from his life and writings that Saicho had room for Shinto practice in his

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[1]Yamamoto, op. cit., p. 480.

[2]Eliot, op. cit., pp. 240-241.

religious system, and that he was cooperating with the early Heian oligarchy which encouraged the closer relationship of Shinto and Buddhism. The fact remains, however, that such a syncretistic view was conceivable within the Tendai philosophy. We shall now proceed to examine the main tenets of this philosophy.

Doctrine of the Tendai School

When Saicho (Dengyo-daishi) asked permission to visit China, he called himself a follower of the Tendai-Hokke-Shu or the School of Tendai and Lotus. Evidently, the two terms--Tendai and Hokke--were used alternately until Saicho's return from China. Tendai is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese name "T'ien-t'ai," which is the name of a mountain in China where Chi-i (531-597) lived and taught his cisciples. Hokke is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese name "Fa-hua," the translation of the text Saddharma-pundarika or the "Lotus of the Good Law." Prior to the establishment of the T'ien-t'ai school, a version of the Lotus Sutra was recorded as early as 300 A.D. A four volume commentary was completed by Chu Fa-tsung, but wide acceptance of the sutra came after Kumarajiva's translation of the text early in the fifth century.[1]

Although the Japanese Tendai school developed differently from the Chinese T'ien-t'ai school, its basic theological structure was an adaptation of the T'ien-t'ai system to the Japanese situation in the early Heian period.[2] We shall first discuss the doctrinal development of the T'ien-t'ai school in China.

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[1]Takakusu, op. cit., p. 126.

[2]Bunyiu Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects (Tokyo: Bukkyo-Sho-ei-yaku-shuppan-sha, 1886), pp. 73-77.

The T'ien-t'ai school claims Hui-wen of the sixth century as its founder and Hui-Ssu as the second patriarch. Historically, however, scholars agree that the school originated with Chi-i. Chi-i in his youth followed the Ch'an sect (Zen in Japanese) of Bodhidharma, but later he laid stress on the value of the study of the scriptures, though he did not reject the meditation of the Ch'an sect entirely. Chi-i felt that through persevering study and reflection not only would the contradiction within the Mahayana sutras disappear, but the truth-seeking soul would gain enlightenment and attain deep peace. Thus, Chi-i classified the Mahayana sutras for the sake of other seekers. Although the historical foundation on which Chi-i built his system was shaky, his solution was creative. His main principle was that the speeches and utterances of Sakyamuni point to five periods in his life, and the Mahayana sutras should be classified accordingly. If one followed this system, according to Chi-i, he would come to know that the various systems of salvation, far from contradicting one another, completed one another.

According to Chi-i's system, the five periods were: (1) The first three weeks of Sakyamuni's life after his enlightenment; the Kegon-kyo (Avatansaka) corresponds to this period. (2) The next twelve years of Sakyamuni's life, portrayed in the Hinayana scriptures. (3) The next eight years of Sakyamuni's life, portrayed in the writings which are peculiar to Mahayana. (4) The next twenty-two years of Sakyamuni's life during which time he taught that Hinayana was a preparatory vehicle to Mahayana; we find this teaching in the Ta-pan-jo-ching or Mahaprajnaparamita sutra. (5) Finally, when Sakyamuni had reached the age of seventy-

two, he taught that every individual may attain nirvana; this doctrine is found in the Lotus sutra, the principal scripture for the whole of Buddhism.[1] (This division into five periods shows the chronological development of Sakyamuni's teaching. But Buddha Sakyamuni in meeting particular cases would have utilized any method at any time.)

Chi-i also proposed Kegi Shi-kyo or "Four Divisions of Method of Teaching," and Keho Shi-kyo or "Four Divisions of Contents of Teaching."

The "Four Divisions of Method of Teaching" was divided as follows: (1) The ton or abrupt method of teaching, by which Buddha Sakyamuni preached without using any expediency; this method was used at the time of the Kegon (Avatansaka). (2) the zen or gradual method of teaching, using all kinds of measures; this was used during Buddha Sakyamuni's stay at Deer Park. (3) The himitsu or mystic method of teaching, by which Buddha Sakyamuni taught individual listeners respectively and secretly. (4) The fujo or indeterminate method of teaching, by which Buddha Sakyamuni taught all listeners together, and yet the listeners understood the teaching differently.[2]

The "Four Divisions of Contents of Teaching" was divided as follows: (1) The zo or scripture--the doctrine of the Pitakas. It included Agamas (traditions or discourses) and all Hinayana doctrines such as those found in the Vaibhasa literature. (2) The

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[1]Reichelt, op. cit., pp. 42-45; Sato, op. cit., pp. 24-26.

[2]Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 71-72; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 132-133.

tsu or progress--the doctrine common to all. It was common to the three vehicles and was the elementary Mahayana doctrine. (3) The betsu or distinct--the doctrine of distinction. This was the doctrine for superior bodhisattvas and taught the Middle Path. (4) The en or completion--the doctrine of perfection. This taught the principle that one is all and all is one.[1]

Takakusu examines these five periods of teaching in relation to the four doctrines:

> 1. The Time of the Wreath [Avatansaka or Kegon] is not yet pure 'round' (completion) because it includes the Distinct Doctrine.
> 2. The Time of the Deer Park is only one-sided as it teaches only Hinayanistic views.
> 3. The Time of Development [the third period of Buddha Sakyamuni's life according to Chi-i] mainly teaches the Round Doctrine [En] and yet is linked with the Common and Distinct Doctrines. Therefore, it is not quite perfect or complete.
> 4. The Time of the Lotus alone is purely 'round' [complete] and superlatively excellent, wherein the purpose of the Buddha's advent on earth is fully and completely expressed.
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> The supplementary Nirvana resumes what the Buddha had preached during his whole life, i.e., the three vehicles and the four doctrines were dismissed by converting the three Vehicles to the One Vehicle and combining the four doctrines with the one ultimate Round [En] Doctrine. Thus, all teachings of the Buddha are absorbed finally into the Lotus which is considered by Tendai to be the Supreme Doctrine of all Buddhism.
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> The school admits the existence of only One Vehicle (Ekayana) to convey all beings across the ocean of life, though it also admits the temporary existence of the three Vehicles (Triyana), i.e., sravaka (hearers, disciples), pratyeka-buddha (self-enlightened, enlightened for himself) and bodhisattva (would-be Buddha).
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> For expediency, these three vehicles are taught, but ultimately they are all brought back to the one true Buddha-yana [Butsu-jo].[2]

Chi-i is said to have written about twenty-two works which

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[1]Sato, op. cit., pp. 27-28; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 133-134; Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 359-364.

[2]Takakusu, op. cit., p. 134.

are included in the Chinese Tripitaka, but nearly all of them were notes of his lectures taken down by his disciple, Kuan-ting (d. 632). Three of them were treasured as T'ien-t'ai San-ta-pu (the three great works).[1] Judging from these three works and other minor writings also ascribed to him we come to recognize the role of Chi-i in the history of Buddhism in the Far East. He dealt with the metaphysical problems which confronted the student of Buddhism in sixth century China.

Although Chi-i's system was comprehensive and encyclopedic, he regarded the Lotus sutra as the quintessence of truth. He fully approved of the worship of Amida and died invoking his name. Chi-i's concern was to find a place for every kind of Buddhist religious experience and a point of view from which all forms of Buddhist thought might be seen to have some value. He saw no antagonism between the Hinayana and the Mahayana. All sutras were good if they suited the minds of particular hearers at particular times. Ordinary people were not expected to understand the en-kyo or "complete doctrine" all at once, but they could eventually attain it through relative truth. Chi-i encouraged all men, whether quick or slow in understanding, to aim at the "complete and sudden doctrine," which enables them to attain the enlightenment.[2]

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[1] T'ien-t'ai San-ta-pu are: (1) Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching-hsuan-i or "A Hidden Meaning of the Saddharmapundarika-sutra" (Nanjio, 1534), (2) Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching-hsuan-i-wen-chu or "An Explanation of the Words and Sentences of the Lotus sutra" (Nanjio, 1536), and (3) Mo-ha-chih-kuan or "Great Cessation and Seeing Clearly" (Nanjio, 1538). Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching-hsuan-i is a systematic exposition of Buddhist philosophy based on the Lotus sutra. Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching-hsuan-i-wen-chu is an explanation of the text of the Lotus sutra. Mo-ha-chih-kuan is a treatise on meditation as understood by the T'ien-t'ai school.

[2] Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, p. 68.

The Buddhology of the T'ien-t'ai, as taught by Chi-i, was very comprehensive and harmonious. Since the Lotus sutra played the most significant role in this system, Sakyamuni naturally became the center of public worship. Doctrinally, Sakyamuni was really a man and yet the truth itself. As a man of historical reality, he attained the full truth of existence and lived accordingly. Thus, he was the Tathagata, the one who attained the truth. But this aspect of his being was at the same time a manifestation of the Dharmata, the fundamental nature of the universe. The Buddha came to the world to teach the Dharmata; this aspect of the Buddha was called the Dharma-kaya or the "Truth-body." All creatures participate in this "universal Buddha-soul"; faith is a realization of the innermost identity of our own being with the Dharma-kaya. The historical Buddha Sakyamuni is also a manifestation of a buddha in the Nirmana-kaya or the "Condescension-body." The Nirmana-kaya means that a buddha appeared in human form to arouse our being to communion with him; he became the object of our faith in this world period. Besides this condescending manifestation of the Nirmana-kaya, the Buddha reveals his wisdom and power, exhibiting them in the blissful glories of celestial existence. Thus, the T'ien-t'ai system believed in the infinite varieties of the Buddha's Sambhoga-kaya or the "Blissful body"; hence the varieties of celestial abodes for different blissful lives. Among these abodes of bliss, ryozen-jodo or "Paradise of Vulture Park," an idealization of the Vulture Park where Buddha Sakyamuni is said to have taught the Lotus doctrine, became revered. These three bodies or "aspects of Buddha's being"[1] became identified in the

[1]The three bodies of the Buddha are: The Dharma-kaya or

same way as our triune nature--the corporeal, the spiritual, and the metaphysical. One who realized this fundamental oneness of our being with that of the Buddha could become a bodhisattva, the would-be Buddha. Amitabha, Kuan-yin, and other great bodhisattvas were worshipped in the T'ien-t'ai school, and there was a special procedure for mediating on Amitabha. Thus, Buddhology, ethics, and worship in this school were closely interwoven. Faith is perfected by moral life, whereas morality is based on faith.[1]

> The T'ien-t'ai doctors do not like the assertion that their teaching is derived from the Zen, and indeed it is not correct to represent it as a mere amplification or development of that school. But Chinese texts certainly represent the first three Patriarchs as having started by being adherents of Zen and there is nothing uncomplimentary to the T'ien-t'ai in supposing that they found it inadequate and careless of all sides of religion except one. The ecclesiastical biographies of Tao-Hsuan describe both Hui-Ssu and Chi-i as Ch'an-shih, teachers of Zen, and Nien Ch'ang's History of Buddhism applies the same epithet to Hui-Wen. Dengyo Daishi, too, who introduced the T'ien-t'ai into Japan, traces his spiritual lineage to Bodhidharma.[2]

Chi-i's successor as the second patriarch was his pupil Kuan-ting, who edited Chi-i's "Three Great Works." The sixth patriarch, Tan-jan (717-782) was a great scholar. His disciple, Tao-sui, transmitted the succession to Saicho or Dengyo-daishi from Japan.

Dengyo-daishi was attracted by the T'ien-t'ai teaching that every man and every creature could ultimately become a buddha and that buddhahood was not merely revealed to a few extraordinary na-

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the Truth-body, Nirmana-kaya or the Condescension-body, and the Sambhoga-kaya or the Blissful body.

[1]Anesaki, op. cit., pp. 116-118.

[2]Eliot, op. cit., p. 172.

tures. The pantheistic tenet of the T'ien-t'ai school was in a way a return to Indian metaphysics; it restored an "absolute" into Buddhist metaphysics. It recognized identical Buddhistic essence, the "absolute nature of Buddha" or Buddha-Tathata in all beings. Buddha and the animate and inanimate universe were regarded as essentially of the same nature and origin.[1] This theological system was congenial to Dengyo-daishi, who was seeking a systematic justification of religious syncretism. Basically, the T'ien-t'ai theological system was an effort to save the world of appearance, which Buddhism in India tended to deny. All things are void and relative since they depend on causes; but because they are produced they enjoy relative existence.

The T'ien-t'ai refers to a verse on the Middle Path in the Madhyamika Sastra.

> What is produced by causes,
> That, I say, is identical with Void.
> It is also identical with mere name.
> It is again the purport of the Middle Path.[2]

Following the insight of Nagarjuna quoted above, the T'ien-t'ai identifies causal origination (pratitya-samutpada), void (sunyata), and the Middle Path. Being both void and relative is the nature of dharma. Material existence is not basically different from void, and void is not different from material existence. The triple truth of the T'ien-t'ai school begins at this point: the truth of void, the truth of temporariness, and the truth of mean. Non-existence and temporary existence are regarded as contrasts, and the middle is not between the two but identical

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

[2]Takakusu, op. cit., p. 129.

with the two. The T'ien-t'ai school concludes that this is the theory of all dharmas, and therefore, the worldly state is permanent. The whole universe is said to have the consistency of "three thousand," and the world is divided in ten realms.[1] "Three thousand" refers to the interpenetration of all dharmas and the ultimate unity of the whole universe. The ten realms are mutually immanent and mutually inclusive. And the T'ien-t'ai school claims that a conscious-instant (ichi-nen in Japanese) has three thousand worlds immanent in it.

> Thus the philosophy of Tendai [T'ien-t'ai] establishes a synthesis, called the Middle Way, between the two extremes of common-sense realism and transcendental idealism. . . . The Middle Way is at the same time the all-embracing One Road (Ekayana), because it presupposes the basic unity of Buddha and all other beings, and emphsizes the possibility . . . of raising all beings to the dignity of Buddha himself. . . . Thus the whole realm of existence is nothing but a stage of "mutual participation" of beings and their conditions, a grand harmony of all possible instruments glorifying in unison the fundamental oneness of existence.[2]

Considering the religious history of Japan and social conditions of the early Heian period, it is understandable why Dengyo-daishi built a grand scheme of religion based on the T'ien-t'ai theological system.

In his work Naisho-Buppo-sojoketsumyakufu, or "Spiritual lineages of the Buddhist teaching,"[3] which he presented to Emperor Saga, Dengyo-daishi discusses four elements which constitute the Tendai system. The four elements are: (1) Moral Precept, (2) Action of Meditation, (3) the Mantra or Mikkyo practice, and (4) the Zen (Ch'an) practice.

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[1]Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 364-366.

[2]Anesaki, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

[3]Yamamoto, op. cit., pp. 371-416.

(1) According to Dengyo-daishi, the Moral Precept of completion and suddenness was first received by Sakyamuni from Buddha Vairocana. It was given to the Bodhisattva Ajita (Maitreya), and was passed through more than twenty bodhisattvas. Kumarajiva arrived at China in the fifth century and transmitted this doctrine to his Chinese pupils. Chi-i received the transmission and gave it to Kuan-ting, whose successor Tao-sui gave it to Saicho (Dengyo-daishi) and Gishin (Shuzen-daishi). This transmission was known as the Jimon or Onjoji. (2) The action of Meditation was handed down to patriarchs in India from Sakyamuni. In China, Hui-wen in the sixth century followed the view of Nagarjuna, the thirteenth Indian patriarch, and Hui-wen's successor Hui-Ssu transmitted it to Chi-i. Saicho received it from Tao-sui, and in Japan he gave it to Encho (Jakko-daishi) and Ennin (Jikaku-daishi). (3) The Mantra or Mikkyo practice was orally transmitted from Buddha Vairocana to Vajrasattva (Kongo-satta). Subhakarasinha arrived in China from Central India in 716. Shortly afterward, Vajrabodhi of India arrived, and his pupil Amoghavajra went back to India to get further instruction and returned to China. Saicho received instruction from Shun-chiao, a disciple of Amoghavajra, and brought the Mantra practice to Japan. (4) The Zen or the "Law of Bodhidharma" passed through twenty-eight Indian and seven Chinese patriarchs. In 710, Tao-hsuan, a Chinese Vinaya teacher, came to Nara and taught the Zen of the Northern School. He transmitted the doctrine to Gohyo, who in turn transmitted it to Saicho.[1]

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[1]Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 73-77; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 128-131; Eliot, op. cit., p. 322; Hiyane, op. cit., pp. 357-358.

In addition to these four elements which constitute the Tendai system, Saicho, as mentioned earlier, did not hesitate to accept Shinto elements in his religious structure. Basically, his gigantic scheme of national religion was fundamentally based on the Lotus doctrine. But, practically, the Tendai's Mikkyo or Mantra aspect attracted people of all social strata. In this sense, the Tendai school in Japan was a forerunner of the Shingon school which was transmitted by Kobo-daishi or Kukai.

Life of Kobo-daishi

Kobo-daishi, who was known as Kukai during his lifetime, was born on the fifteenth day of the sixth month of the fifth year of the Koki era (or A.D. 774), in a small fishing village Byobu-ga-ura on Shikoku Island. Ten years after his birth, the capital of Japan moved from Nara to Nagaoka, and in 794, it was moved again to Kyoto.

Kukai's father was Saegi Ataegimi and his mother was Ato Tamayori. The Saegi family and the Ato family were related; this bond was deepened when Kukai's uncle (his father's younger brother) Otari was adopted by the Ato family.[1] Kukai's uncle, Ato Otari,

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[1]There were two divisions of the Saegi family. One could be traced back to Emperor Keiko (c. 291-322) and the other to Otomo Muroya (c. 456-506). The former had settled in Harima (present Hyogo-prefecture), and the latter, to which Kukai belonged, had settled on Shikoku island. According to the geneology of Kukai, the family traced its ancestry to Ame-no-Oshihiko-no-mikoto, the son of Takamimusubi-no-mikoto of the mythological pantheon of Japan. Ame-no-Oshihiko-no-mikoto's descendant, Michi-no-omi-no-mikoto, was a warrior under Emperor Jimmu (c. 40-10 B.C.). Michi-no-omi-no-mikoto's descendant, Takehi-no-mikoto, accompanied the expedition of Prince Yamato-takeru against the Emishi (Ainu) and later was given land on Shikoku island. Takehi-no-mikoto's son, Muroya, was a minister; and Muroya's son, Omono, and grandson, Wako, both became kunikko or governor of Sanuki in Shikoku island.

was a Confucian scholar who served as tutor to Prince Iyo, the fourth son of Emperor Kwammu. As mentioned earlier, Prince Iyo was banished because of court intrigue, and his tutor, Ato Otari, escaped from the capital. This was the time when the Fujiwara family was becoming stronger politically, and other leading families, such as the Otomo, found themselves in precarious positions. Although the Fujiwara family dominated politically, others attempted to hold high positions in court through the channels of education and religion.[1] The destiny of Ato Otari was significant in this connection. As we shall see later, Kukai also aspired to be a Confucian scholar under the influence of his uncle, though his older brother remained home as a member of the local gentry. His older sister, Chiye, was married to a Shinto priest of Takino-miya; their son was Chisen-hoshi.[2] Kukai's younger brother was later known as Shinga, abbot of Jokwanji. Kukai's younger sister was married to Wake Iyenari; her son Enchin, known as Chisho-daishi, was the founder of the Tendai-Jimon school. Kukai's youngest

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Otomo Wako's son was given the family name of Saegi, and his descendants remained as kunikko for four generations. In 646, according to the Taikwa reform edict, the position of kunikko was discontinued, and many of the local officials who lost their posts moved to the capital and were given minor government positions. Kukai's relatives, Saegi Tadamochi and Saegi Masao, were given the rank of sukune, but Kukai's father's family was not given any title. This geneology of Kukai's family may not be accurate historically, as in the case of many Japanese families, but it nevertheless indicates that his family was an old established family in Shikoku, and that it was related to the powerful Otomo clan.

[1]This trend continued until the middle of the Heian period when the Fujiwaras invaded even the domain of education and religion.

[2]Chisen-hoshi was one of Kukai's closest disciples. He was stationed at Mount Koya and later at the Shingon temple, Toji, in Kyoto.

brother's son became the second abbot of the Shingon monastery at Mount Koya and was known as Shinzen. Thus, Kukai's family was divided between Shinto, Shingon and Tendai activities.

Kukai's birth and childhood are the subject of miraculous legends the accuracy of which is highly debatable. In fact, his whole life story, as it has survived in the religious tradition of Japan, is full of wonders. Even today, Kukai is remembered among the masses as the wonder-working apostle. Lloyd quotes a religious ballad, written in the ordinary 7.5.7.5. meter of the Japanese Wasan, which has been handed down among the followers of the Shingon school:

1. On the fifth day of the middle decade of the sixth month in the fifth year of Hoki, in the Baron's Hall on the shore of Byobu, in the land of Sanuki, a bright light shone. It was the birth of our great sage.

2. When the lad was but five years old he would sit constantly among the lotuses, and there hold converse with the Buddhas. But what he spoke of he never told, not even to his mother.

3. In his heart there arose the desire to save mankind from all their sorrows and pains, and he sought on Mount Shashin to accomplish this desire by the sacrifice of his own life. Then angels came and saved him from death.

4. Whilst at play he built himself a pagoda of clay. The Four Heavenly Kings at once came and stood guard over it. The Imperial Messenger passing by saw the prodigy and was amazed. "This," said he, "is a divine prodigy."

5. In the fifteenth year of his age, in spring-time, he left his native village and went to Kyoto, where he diligently studied all the doctrines of Confucianism. But he found that they contained no wisdom wherein he might put his trust.

6. In his search after truth he learned all Buddhist doctrines. Of all the Buddhas he learned to trust especially in Hojo, whom he made his special deity.

7. But (his mind was so nimble) that though he learned but one thing or two, he could thence deduce a thousand. "Many are the ways," he said in his Sangoshiki; "but Buddhism is the best of all."

8. At Moroto in Tosa he was performing his devotions. A bright star fell from Heaven, and entered his mouth. At midnight an evil dragon came forth against him; but he spat upon it, and with his saliva he killed it.

9. It was in the nineteenth year of his age that, looking up to Gonzo as his religious guide, he took upon himself the vows of the Bodhisattva, and became a homeless S'ramana, striving after enlightenment, and wearing the black silk robes of the Buddhist priest.

10. At Shusenji in the province of Idzu, and in other places besides, he discovered the hot springs bubbling out of earth. And it was he that demonstrated to the world the use of coal.

11. Inside the tower of the Temple of Kumedera in Yamato there was revealed to him the doctrine which is above all others. But as there was none whom he could question thereon, he received permission from the Emperor to go to China for study.[1]

This ballad is commonly known as Namu-daishi, and it does not pretend to be an authentic biography. There is an official history of the Shingon school, called Shingon-den,[2] which was written by Eikwai, abbot of Jison-in. It is divided into seven sections, and the third section is devoted to Dengyo-daishi, Kobo-daishi, and Kobo's disciples. Another account which has been considered dependable is the Go-yuikoku[3] or "the will" of Kukai. According to the Go-yuikoku, Kukai is supposed to have dictated the twenty-five points of the will on the fifteenth day of the third month of the second year of Jowa-era, six days before the day he died. His disciples--Jitsuye, Shinzei, Shinga, Shinsho, Kenye and Shingyo--signed their names as witnesses. The first point of the Go-yuikoku deals briefly with the rise of the Shingon

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[1]Lloyd, op. cit., pp. 243-245.

[2]Junkei Washio (ed.), Koku-bun Toho Bukkyo-sosho, Denki-bu (Tokyo: Toho-shoin, 1928) pp. 2-300.

[3]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi (Tokyo: Heibon-sha, 1935), pp. 465-493.

school, or more specifically how Kukai himself had discovered the truth. The Koyasan Kongobuji, the monastery founded by Kukai, published its official history,[1] in which the first section deals with Kukai's early life and the second section with Kukai as the founder of the Shingon school in Japan. All these accounts were written after the death of Kukai with the exception of his Go-yuikoku. It is our task to reconstruct his life, so to speak, from these accounts.

His Go-yuikoku confirms part of the ballad Namu-daishi quoted above. In spite of his own statements, it is hard to believe from his early career, that Kukai aspired to be a Buddhist priest from his childhood. It is conceivable, however, that he was early exposed to some Buddhistic influence through his relatives who were Shinto priests (Shinto priests were very close to Buddhism in those days). It appears that Kukai's uncle, Ato Otari, encouraged Kukai's parents to let their son "study literature in the university for his future career."[2] Ato Otari himself was a Confucian scholar and was close to the crown. Though political power was in the hands of the Fujiwara family, members of other families could find government positions if they were well educated. Ato Otari gave a guiding hand to the young Kukai who aspired to become a government official. At the age of fifteen, Kukai was taken by his uncle to the capital where he enrolled in the university.

. . . he was sent to the university in the capital to prepare

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[1]Koyasan-Kongobuji-Kinen-daihoye-jimukyoku, Koyasan-Sen-hyakunenshi (Tokyo: Nisshin-sha, 1914).

[2]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, p. 466.

himself for an official career. There he was instructed in Confucianism, but being dissatisfied with its teachings he studied Taoism by himself. Not finding entire satisfaction even in Taoism, in his search for truth he left the capital and went to live in a Buddhist monastery. Then he passed years in wandering among the mountains and forests, training himself more in Taoist than in Buddhist ideas, but the years of mental struggle came to an end when he saw in a vision a certain Buddhist saint, and he became a Buddhist. This conversion is said to have taken place when he was about twenty-two years old, and he wrote down the process of his struggle and conversion in the twenty-fourth year of his age, in 798.[1]

Although Kukai's own Go-yuikoku mentions that he was initiated into Buddhism soon after he left home, it seems more likely that he had only a casual acquaintance with some Buddhist monks and not a thorough indoctrination as his later writings insinuate. His Go-yuikoku also claims that he wrote the Sangoshiki[2] or "Treatises on Three Teachings--Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism" before he was twenty years of age. Other accounts tell us that he wrote a shorter work Rokoshiki at the age of eighteen and that he later revised it and called it Sangoshiki. At any rate, he wandered in the mountains and forest--Awa no Taki no Take, Tosa no Murouto no Saki--winter and summer. This was similar to the training of Mountain Priests (or Shukendo) which was founded by En-no-Gyoja. Since Shukendo was mixture of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism with some Shinto elements added, Kukai must have been exposed to all these religious teachings in some ways. It was at the Makino-Osanji at the district of Izumi that he had his religious experience.

There are different theories about the religious experience

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[1]Anesaki, op. cit., p. 123.

[2]R. Takarada, Sangoshiki-kanchu (2 vols.; Kyoto: Sawada-bunyei-do, 1885).

of Kukai. In the Go-yuikoku he simply mentions that soon after he received the ordination at Makino-Osanji, he made a vow to seek the truth, and while he was praying, a man appeared in his dream and told him: "Here is a sutra. It is called Daibirushana-kyo or Mahavairocana-sutra. This is what you are looking for."[1] According to the Shingon-den, it was at the Todaiji temple at Nara that he had this dream. However, the Muroji temple at Uda had preserved the legend that Kukai visited this temple and that the Abbot Kenye in the course of their conversation mentioned the existence of Dainichikyo (the Mahavairocana-sutra) at Kume Temple. According to the Shingon-den, Zemmui or Subhakarasinha (637-735) brought the Mahavairocana-sutra to Kume Temple.[2] Subhakarashinha was king of Orissa. When he was fourteen years of age, he became a disciple of a well-known Mantra teacher, Vajrabodhi (this account is unreliable historically, because Vajrabodhi was younger than Subhakarasinha). At any rate, according to this Shingon account, Subhakarasinha wished to deposit the Mahavairocana-sutra in a safe spot and went to Kume Temple in Japan. He stayed there for three years and built a pagoda which he called Toto-in. He left word that in the future a bodhisattva would come and reveal the teaching of this sutra. Then Subhakarasinha left Japan. This account should not be taken literally, but it does imply that Mantra Buddhist sutras were imported into Japan sometime before Saicho and Kukai introduced them officially.

It is safe to conclude that Kukai's religious experience

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[1]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, p. 467.

[2]Washio, op. cit., pp. 14-20.

was not a sudden one. It was a slow process of intellectual conversion, and the contents of the Sangoshiki reveal Kukai's spiritual progress. The introductory remarks in his Sangoshiki tell us that Kukai had been exposed to different religious influences. Although he does not mention names, it is clear that he was initiated into Confucianism under his uncle--Ato Otari. Also Ato Otari's friend, Gonso, a Sanron priest, instructed him in the kokuzo-gumonji-ho, a part of Kongo-choyugachuryakushutsunenzu-kyo or "sutra for reciting, being an abridged translation of the Vajrasekhara-yoga."[1] It was mentioned earlier, in connection with Buddhist schools in the Nara period, that a leading Sanron priest, Doji, went to China to study the Mantra teaching under Subhakarasinha, the translator of Kokuzo-gumonji-ho.[2] From that time on, the Japanese Sanron school was partly under Mantra influence. It was also mentioned that Saicho or Dengyo-daishi was initiated into Buddhism by a Sanron priest, Gyohyo (722-797). Therefore, it is not surprising to read that a Sanron priest, Gonso, first initiated Kukai into Mantra practices. In the Sangoshiki, Kukai mentions that he was attracted by the Kokuzo-gumonji, which taught that if one recited the Shingon or True Word one million times he would be able to memorize all the teachings of the holy religion. Thus, Kukai became a mountain priest and wandered in the forests and mountains reciting the Shingon. Kukai continues to say, in the Sangoshiki, that one of his relatives, presumably Ato Otari,

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[1]Nanjio, A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka, p. 123.

[2]Shinkyo Mochizuki, Bukkyo Daijiten (Tokyo: Bukkyo Daijiten Hakkosho, 1931) II, 1136.

was not in favor of his joining the priesthood, giving the reason that it was against the teaching of Chu-ko or "loyalty to throne and filial piety." But, Kukai came to realize that three different teachings--Shaku (Buddhism), Li (Taoism), and Ko (Confucianism) --taught the truth. Although there were degrees of truth, he felt that the truth values of the three teachings must be combined in one synthesis. This he attempted to achieve in the Sangoshiki.

The contents of the Sangoshiki may be summarized: There are three imaginary persons, called Kimo-sensei or Betsumo (a Confucianist), Moin-shoshi or Kyomo-inshi (a Taoist), and Kemyo-koji (a Buddhist). The main arguments start with moralistic questions. The Shiki or "goal" of the three religions (Sango) are to benefit the world and save men. Kukai's underlying thought is that the teachings of Confucianism and Taoism are concerned only with the immediate needs of people and do not touch the basic meaning of human existence. In addition to the three religious teachers there appear two men--a wealthy gentleman, Tokakudo, and his nephew, Chitsuga-koshi. Chitsuga's mind is described as resembling that of a wolf and his nature as resembling that of a tiger. He had no etiquette and he was daily engaged in gambling, hunting in wild mountains, and fishing in rivers and the ocean; furthermore, he indulged in habitual drinking and affairs with women. One day the Confucianist came to Tokakudo's house. Tokakudo, who was concerned with the behavior of his nephew, requested the Confucianist to talk to Chitsuga. The Confucianist was not enthusiastic about this assignment, but he attempted to reform Chitsuga by teaching him the meaning of Confucian virtues. He tried to point out the essential goodness of human nature, and that if only one learned

the teachings of the Sage (Confucius) he would be able to practice the virtues of righteousness, propriety, faithfulness, conscientiousness, discrimination, and filial piety. The Confucianist was also very pragmatic and stressed the worldly reward of his teachings, such as high position in society, longer life, freedom from sneers, real happiness, and beauty of friendship. After listening to the Confucianist, Chitsuga repented his previous mistakes and vowed that he would follow the Sage's teachings. Chitsuga's uncle was grateful to the Confucianist. At that moment came the Taoist. He laughed at the Confucianist and said that it was better to give no teaching than to present the Confucian virtues. The Confucianist asked the Taoist for clarification, and the Taoist said, "the blind cannot see the ray of shining sun and the deaf cannot hear the sound of roaring thunderstorm." However, upon repeated requests, the Taoist proceeded to teach the doctrine of nothingness. The Taoist teaching dealt with the mystery of eternal life. The way to attain this mystery was by keeping the body from the dirty dust of the mundane world, keeping the mind from all desires, setting the eyes far off, not allowing the mouth to speak on irrelevant subjects, and not indulging in food. He also stressed filial piety, faithfulness, and benevolence, and urged Chitsuga to "throw out gold as though it were a filthy worm, look at a beautiful woman as though she were a devil, and pursue study in Senjutsu or magical power." According to the Taoistic view, once he gained the magical power, he could live under the earth, walk on the water, enslave giants, ride on dragons, swallow sword or fire, and cause wind or rain. "Therefore," said the Taoist, "if you turned to this doctrine,

you could change your figure, prolong life, fly around in the cosmos, and enjoy heavenly bliss. Then you would have no more desire, no more thoughts of any kind, and you could live as long as heaven and earth, and you would enjoy what the sun and the moon enjoy." Having heard the secret of Taoism, the Confucianist, Tokakudo, and his nephew were completely overwhelmed by its profound meaning. While they were discussing this further among themselves, the Buddhist appeared on the scene. He looked pale and undernourished, and his neck resembled that of a turtle. The Buddhist simply declared that the virtues of loyalty and filial piety could be appreciated only when one reached the truth of the universe. External acts, such as pleasant smiles for parents or helping them when they enter and leave the room, are not virtues in themselves. Even though one studied the profound subjects of astronomy, geography, and history of the past, and could contribute something to his master, this was not true loyalty. He said, "conventional loyalty and filial piety often cause more unhappiness in the long run." Then, he pointed to the Confucianist and Taoist and said, "although you seem to know that our physical bodies will decay, you do not as yet seem to realize what will follow. Human bodies are not built like diamonds; they are more like earthenware. Even the body of a noble man will decay. Even the figure of a beautiful lady will be either burned or eaten by dogs and birds. The storm of Mujo or suffering will make no distinction according to man's wealth or position. Buddhism alone teaches the truth of human life and one must leave worldly desires and attachments in order to attain the ultimate truth."[1]

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[1]Free summary of Sangoshiki by the present writer.

Reading the Sangoshiki, we note that Kukai was a great literary genius. He shows several different facets. On the one hand, while attempting an intellectual inquiry of "truth," he is sometimes carried away by his interest in magical power. On the other hand, we notice his preoccupation with pragmatic aspects of religion--that is to say, Kukai was searching for happiness and security which would benefit men of his time. Although the Confucianist, Taoist, and Buddhist characters who appear in the Sangoshiki present differences in their respective religions, their arguments are not in the form of either/or propositions. Rather, Kukai presents the three religions according to his system of hierarchy, so that the teachings of Confucianism are consumed by Taoist religion, and truth values of Confucianism and Taoism are not rejected but transformed by Buddhism. This hierarchy of value in Kukai's mind was more fully developed later when he wrote on the ten stages of spiritual growth. There is little affinity between the main tenets of the Sangoshiki and his later works, written after his return from China. The Sangoshiki does not represent the Shingon school, except that its synthetic quality was carried over into later works of Kukai who developed the synthetic and syncretistic school of Shingon Buddhism.

In 804, when he was thirty years of age, Kukai secured permission to study in China. We quote the Namudaishi again:

> 12. In company with the ambassadors that were sent to the court of the Tangs in China, he arrived at a certain port of China. But the party was not allowed to land, because they had not come to the usual port of debarkation.
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> 13. Then did our sage write a letter in the name of the ambassadors, in which he described all the pains and perils of the

voyage over the sea, with its storms and billows. And then were they allowed to land.

14. Keikwa the Ac'arya was delighted to welcome him, and having purified the Mandara for him, committed to him the whole of the great law of the Ryobu in its entirety, to its lowest depths.

15. Keikwa the Ac'arya told him that the secret treasure of the Shingon law lay hidden within the sacred books, and that it would be well for him to make use of the help of pictures.

16. (From Keikwa) Kobo received over a hundred books explaining the Ryobu Mandara as contained in the doctrine of the Vajrayana. Also he received many sacred vessels and implements that had been handed down from the days of Amogha, the doctor of the Tripitaka.

17. The boy whom he met wrote the character for "dragon" upon the water. But our Sage, seeing that one small stroke had been omitted, took up his pen and supplied that which was wanting. Then the dragon revealed himself in his true form and flew away to the sky.

18. Under Prajna, the monk of Nalanda in Central India, and under Munis'ri, the Master of the Tripitaka, he studied Sanskrit, and was by them presented with many books of the Scriptures in Sanskrit.

19. With a pen in his mouth, one in each hand, and one in each foot, he wrote five lines of a poem simultaneously. The Tang Emperor was astonished at what he saw, and gave him the title of the "Five-Pen-Priest."

20. But when Keikwa his teacher died, he wrote his memorial on a monument, moistening his inkslab with his tears, and erected it at Ryugen.

21. Now, when he was about to return to his own land, standing on the sea-beach he threw his vajra towards Japan. Strange to say, the vajra flew straight across, and was found hanging on the branch of a pine tree at Takano.

22. The secret doctrines which he had learned in the land of the Tang, together with many precious and rare objects for the protection of the land, all these, together with the catalogue, he offered in the Imperial Palace.[1]

The ballad quoted above does not claim to be historically accurate, but in the main it agrees with Kukai's own account and

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[1] Lloyd, op. cit., pp. 245-248.

the Shingon-den. Kukai's petition to the court for permission to go abroad was accompanied by a letter from his master, Gonso. Kukai's letter indicates that he was chosen by buddhas and bodhisattvas to promote the teaching which had been initiated in Japan by Subhakarasinha. He mentions how he had been led to Kume temple where the Mahavairocana-sutra had been kept, and he felt that he was the bodhisattva prophesied by Subhakarasinha as the one who would come and bring the nation to peace. After several months of waiting, Kukai was invited to the court where he became a favorite of Emperor Kwammu. It was decreed that he would accompany Ambassador Fujiwara Kadomaro. In those days going across the ocean was considered a risk. It is told that in 801 Fujiwara Kadomaro and Sugawara Kiyokimi were ordered to visit China as Japanese Ambassadors to the court of T'ang, and in the succeeding year they started on the voyage, but were obliged to turn back owing to a violent storm which damaged the vessels. According to legend, in 804, the ships were rebuilt and both Saicho (Dengyo-daishi) and Kukai joined the ambassador and his group; Kukai boarded the first vessel with Kadomaro, while Saicho went on the second, but they did not meet until they both returned to Japan (this legend is highly unreliable however). At any rate, Kukai, before going on board, is said to have asked his master, Gonso, to take care of his nephew Chisen and to have visited the Hachiman shrine at Usa where he dedicated copies of the Prajnaparamita-hridaya-sutra which he had copied himself. He also sent his own portrait to his mother. The whole fleet set out for Minchau (the present Ning-po). But during the voyage, a storm overtook the ships, scattering them

in different directions. Kukai's boat drifted to the Foochow area. The inspecting officials of Chang-chi would not allow the Japanese visitors to go on shore. Kukai, in this predicament, wrote a memorandum to the officials explaining the full circumstances of the case, after which they were allowed to land.

Historians have often speculated on what Kukai expected to study in China. Kukai, in his Go-yuikoku, claims that he had looked in vain in Japan for a teacher on the Mahavairocana-sutra, so he decided to go abroad to find a teacher. But shortly after he reached China, Hui-kuo (Keikwa in Japanese) accepted him as a master in Mantra Buddhism. This account implies that Kukai was well acquainted with the Mahavairocana-sutra. Probably his visit to China was motivated by the success of his senior contemporary, Saicho, who had received a valid ordination and acquired many sutras and other equipment for rituals from China. Kukai was an ardent admirer of the civilization of T'ang China, which was one of the most flourishing periods in the history of China, although when Kukai arrived the T'ang dynasty was already beginning to decline.

> It was in the middle of the eighth century that Chinese political organization and cultural achievement reached their climax. T'ang Hsuan-tsung founded the famous Hanlin, or Academy of Letters, through which men of extraordinary abilities might be housed in comfort and luxury. Schools were established throughout the country. Buddhism and poetry reached the heyday of their development. The achievement in historiography was also remarkable. Pottery making progressed, and printing had its beginning. . . .
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> Unfortunately, the abolition of the farmer-soldier system in 749 . . . and a laissez-faire policy toward the tribes in Manchuria gave the peoples on the northeastern frontier a chance to attack China south of the Wall. . . .
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> An Lu-shan revolted in 755, and within a few months Lo-yang

and Ch'ang-an were taken. . . . The rebellion was finally suppressed in 763 by imperial forces with the help of foreign troops, especially the Turkish Uigurs, but the use of foreign troops to put down civil revolt caused the foreigners in China to become arrogant and led to frontier troubles. . . . The generals in the protectorates became increasingly powerful as the integrity of administrative machinery was broken down and the power of the central government was weakened. Since a century and a half passed before the T'ang empire entered upon its final agony, the reign of T'ang Hsuan-tsung [713-756], especially the revolution of An Lu-shan, may be considered the demarcation line between the golden age and the fall of T'ang.

After 763 the central government lived on the old cultural prestige of Ch'ang-an and the financial support of grain from the lower Yangtze basin. . . . In the latter part of the T'ang era there were a few good emperors, but most of them were incapable, short-lived, and too much under the control of eunuchs. . . . Hsien-tsung (806-820) was the first emperor to meet a violent death at the hands of eunuchs. . . .

. . . .

Contemporary poetry revealed the political and social insecurity. The masses were helpless. Many were superstitious. Taoism grew stronger. Numbers of the people turned to Taoist charms against devils and misfortunes, and sought the elixir of immortality. The popularity of Taoism and of Buddhist and Taoist priests, who were exempted from military conscription and taxpaying, caused religious persecution in 845, when Buddhists, Taoists, and followers of other religions, including Nestorian Christians, suffered greatly.[1]

When Kukai visited China in 804, several religions[2] were tolerated in Ch'ang-an. How widespread Mantra Buddhism was in China when Kukai arrived is difficult to determine, but it was highly respected in the court of T'ang, because we read that Amoghavajra (705-774) was an instructor of Hsuan-tsung, Su-tsung and Tai-tsung, three successive emperors. Amoghavajra's disciple, Hui-kuo of Ch'ing-lung temple at Ch'ang-an, was Kukai's master.[3]

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[1]Teng Ssu-yu, "From the Fall of Chou to the Fall of T'ang (ca. 221 B.C. - A.D. 906)," China, ed. by Harley Farnsworth MacNair (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946) pp. 85-87.

[2]In addition to Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, there were Manichaeism, Nestorian Church, Islam, and Zoroastrianism.

[3]The transmission of Mantra Buddhism will be discussed later.

According to his Go-yuikoku, Kukai was met by Hui-kuo with open arms. Hui-kuo is said to have told him, "my life is coming to an end and I have waited for your coming here for a long time." For two months after his arrival at Ch'ing-lung temple, Kukai was instructed in the inner mysteries of Mantra Buddhism. In the fourth month, Hui-kuo gave him the abhiseka or "sprinkling water on the head" (kanjo in Japanese) as the sign of successorship and said, "The Bhagavat or the Blesses One gave the secret key to the truth to Vajrasattva, who transmitted it to Nagarjuna, and so on to myself. Now, because I see you are a man well qualified for this teaching, I gave you the key to the mystery. You should propagate it in your native country."[1] In the Shingon initiation, one is to choose his patron buddha or bodhisattva at the "flower throwing ceremony," in which one eyes are covered and one throws a flower on a mandara. It so happened, according to the legend, that Kukai threw a flower on the symbol of Mahavairocana twice, once on the Taizo mandara and the second time on Kongo mandara. In those days, this ceremony was taken seriously, and Chinese priests were impressed by the guidance of Mahavairocana for Kukai. But at the same time, the unusual favor Hui-kuo had given Kukai caused much jealousy on the part of some Chinese fellow priests. One of the disciples of Shun-hsiao (who was a colleague of Hui-kuo) advised Hui-kuo not to give the secret of the Shingon to a monk from Japan. But Hui-kuo gave the transmission to Kukai and gave him the name Hensho-Kongo or "Shining Diamond." Hui-kuo made arrangements to have painters work on several Mandaras and copyists work on sutras.

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[1]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, p. 470.

After the death of Hui-kuo, Kukai studied further, not only in the religious field but in other cultural areas as well. He studied Sanskrit under the guidance of an Indian monk, Prajna, who is said to have worked with the Nestorian priest Adam.

> Prajna, a Sramana of Kapisa in N. India, came to China via Central India, Simhala (Ceylon), and the Southern Sea (Sumatra, Java, etc.). . . . He arrived at Canton (Kwan-tung). In the third year of the Chien Chung period (A.D. 782) he came to the Upper Province (North). In the second year of the Cheng Yuan period (A.D. 786) he met a relation of his, who came to China before him.
>
> He translated, together with King-ching, a priest from Persia named Adam, who was in the monastery of Ta-ch'in (Syria), the Shatparamita-sutra from a Mongolian text. They finished seven volumes. But at that time Prajna was not acquainted with the Mongolian language, nor did he understand the language of T'ang (Chinese). King-ching (Adam) did not know the Brahma language (Sanskrit), nor was he versed in the teaching of the Sakya (Buddha). . . .[1]

Kukai is said to have introduced into Japan the slightly altered form of the Devanagari letters called Shittan, which is written in vertical columns and much used in Shingon books. But the fact that Kukai had studied under Prajna cannot be taken to mean that Kukai came in direct contact with Christianity. Interesting as they may be, attempts to identify certain mysterious terms used in Alexandrian Gnosticism--for example--Abraxas and Kaulaukau --with the terminology of Shingon school in Japan have not met with general acceptance.[2] At the same time, the lack of historical evidence must not close our eyes totally to the possible influences Kukai could have received from several religions existing in China. During his stay in Ch'ang-an, Kukai must have been exposed to the

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[1] I-Tsing, A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago, trans. J. Takakusu (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), p. 224.

[2] Eliot, op. cit., pp. 337-338.

syncretistic trend which was strong among the intelligentsia there. Although there is no direct reference to this effect, Kukai must have known syncretistic secret societies such as the Chin-tan-chiao or Golden Pill Sect. This secret society is mentioned here because of its resemblance in some respects to the Shingon School in Japan.

> This is beyond doubt one of the most interesting of the secret societies in China, for here we note that the religious element is dominant. . . .
> . . . the founder was an unusually deep personality, who drank deep at the religious fountains. He was Lu-Yuen, also known under the name Shun Yang-tse, a famous literateur of his time. He was born in North China 755 A.D., and spent his youth and early manhood near the places where Mohammedanism and the Nestorian Church first flourished. That he really came in contact with the Christians is clearly evident from the circumstance, that he is mentioned in the text of the Nestorian tablet, as the calligrapher and scholar who assisted the priest Adam (Ching-ching) in formulating the immortal eulogy of the Nestorian Tablet. For according to the latest researches it is reasonably certain that the Lu Hsiu-yuen who is mentioned in the inscription is identical with Lu-yuen, the famous Taoist. . . . During the whole course of his life he stressed religious studies. Like most of the serious thinkers of his time, he was a Taoist. But it is quite clear in his case that the vulgar Taoism, with its transmutation of metals and elixirs of life, was brought up into higher planes of thought.
>
> Finally he organized a religious school, which later in times of stress became a secret society. The mark of its connection with Taoism is left upon the name by which the society became known, Chintan-chiao (Golden Pill Sect).
>
> The society's teachings and cultus show unquestionable signs of Christian and Buddhist influence. . . . It was in collaboration with General Kwo Tze-yi that Lu-yuen in the city of Fen-yang laid the foundation for the new religious community, which has had so great an influence in North and Central China down to our day. He started with the old Chinese thought of the two world forces, Yang and Yin, and developed it--as he thought --under the special inspiration of "The Eight Holy Ones" (Pa Hsien).[1]

Chain-tan-chiao is mentioned, not because we can ascertain a direct relationship between it and the Shingon School in Japan,

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[1]Karl Ludvig Reichelt, Religion in Chinese Garment, trans. Joseph Tetlie (London: Lutterworth Press, 1951), pp. 169-170.

but because it may suggest the kind of religious organization emerging in China at the time Kukai visited there. (Traditionally, scholars have viewed the Shingon School only in the Mahayana Buddhist context and have not sufficiently exhausted the possibility of investigating the "secret society" aspect of the Shingon school with all its "secret transmission" of the True Word by means of Mandaras and oral teachings.)

Many miracles and legends are told about Kukai's stay in China. One reliable legend concerns Kukai's penmanship, which won him the name "Gohitsu-osho" or "five pens priest." Prior to his visit to China, he had studied the writing form of Wang-hsi-chih, which was the standard form of calligraphy in Japan during the Nara period. While in China, he took lessons from Han-fang-min. Kukai was invited by Emperor Hsien Tsung who ordered him to write inscriptions on the court walls. He is also credited with the improvement of the writing brush. It is probable that he introduced the current Chinese custom of brush manufacturing into his native country. Before his time, brushes were made of the hairs of rabbits and sheep, while after his time badger's hair was used. Kukai is said to have investigated painting, sculpture, medicine, astronomy, and industry in China. When he departed, he left a poem to his fellow student, A'carya I-ts'ao:

Studying the same doctrine
Under one master (Hui-kuo),
You and I are friends.

See yonder whitemists
Floating in the air
On the way back to the peaks.

This parting may be our last meeting
In this life.

Not just in a dream,
But in our deep thought,
Let us meet often
Hereafter.[1]

His return trip was comparatively uneventful. A popular legend tells us, however, that they ran into a storm which was calmed by the image of Namiki Fudo, one of the guardian *bodhisattvas* of Kukai. When Kukai returned to Hakata, Kyushu island, he learned that Emperor Kwammu had died. Kukai had been gone for nearly two years, during which time many changes had occurred. Therefore, instead of going directly to Kyoto, Kukai decided to stay in Kyushu to prepare for his future work in his native land.

The ballad *Namudaishi* describes Kukai's life and work after his return from China.

> 23. When to return thanks for the divine protection afforded him during his travels, he offered incantations before the treeless temple-ground (of the god of Kasui), straightway green leaves and bright flowers came forth in abundance on what had till then been the "Naked Mountain."
>
> 24. Our land had once possessed the tea-plant, but the use of tea had been quite forgotten. Our Sage brought with him a millstone and some seeds of the tea-plant, and taught our people how to prepare tea and drink it.
>
> . . . .
>
> 29. In the second month of the second year of Konin (Feb., 811 A.D.) along with the Emperor Saga, he received the Kwanjo of the gods from the hands of Onakatomi, the famous ritualist.
>
> 30. Then, beginning with Dengyo Daishi, he admitted into his Church the head priests of all the Nara sects who had faith in his doctrines, and administered to them the Baptism which admitted them into the priesthood of the Secret Doctrine.
>
> 31. At a religious discussion in the Palace of the Seiryoden his body suddenly assumed the appearance of Vairoc'ana. The Divine Light (Komyo) streamed out from him, and the whole company, over-awed and trembling, fell to the ground and worshipped him.
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> 32. That he might pray for the prosperity of the Fujiwara House, he set up an altar in the Nennendo (at Nara), and there

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[1]Beatrice Lane Susuki, "Poems by Kobo-daishi," *The Eastern Buddhist*, V (1931), 312.

offered worship to Kenjaku Son [Bodhisattva Amoghapasa]. Thereupon the god (of Kasuga) made his appearance and chanted a song of praise.

33. From China he brought to Japan the soil upon which the eight pagodas had stood. This soil he divided amongst eighty-eight places (in Sanuki), so that they who suffer from illness, as the result of Karma either in the past life or present, might go round them on pilgrimage and so be cleansed from their sins.

34. He prayed where the water was brackish, where it was foul, where there was no water at all. Everywhere, to the great joy of mankind, wells of pure water sprang up.

35. In the mountainous districts of the province of Kii, two dogs, one white and one black, and a hunter, came to show him the way, and brought him to a place where there had once been the shrine of an ancient Buddha. The god was the guardian deity of that hunting place.

36. Then Nyuzu appeared, the god of that place . . . and offered him that place until the coming of Maitreya, in order that the land might be blessed by him (Kobo).[1]

As mentioned earlier, the situation in the capital in 806 when Kukai returned to Japan was complex. Emperor Kwammu's son, Emperor Heijo, occupied the throne. Heijo was charmed by Lady Kusuriko, who with her brother Fujiwara Nakanari attempted to dictate to the throne. Kusuriko and Nakanari drove Prince Iyo away, and the prince's tutor, Ato Otari (Kukai's uncle), left the capital. The government was having much trouble in the northern frontiers, and superstitions and occultism were widespread. Kukai hesitated, with good reason, before returning to Kyoto. He wrote a letter addressed to the court and sent it with the catalogue of sutras and other ritual ornaments. He stayed in Gon-gyoji. Evidently the court did not act immediately to call him back, and Kukai wrote another letter. In the second letter he wrote: "Since

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[1]Lloyd, op. cit., pp. 248-251.

I sent to the court a catalogue of sutras and ornaments, I have not received an official invitation to report to the capital. While waiting, I stay in this small temple, enjoying the scenery, practising the Shingon teaching, visiting the shrines for the purpose of thanksgiving and studying the sutras."[1] Legend says this was the temple where Subhakarasinha had stopped over when he visited Japan, but this is not reliable. In 807, Kukai's patron on Kyushu Island, Tanaka Yatsukimaro, built the first Shingon temple for Kukai and called it Tochomitsuji or "Eastern Head Shingon Temple." While this temple was being constructed, the court sent word that Kukai was to remain at Kwannonji (temple dedicated to Kwannon) at Dazaifu, Kyushu. Toward the end of 807, exactly one year after he landed on Japan, Kukai was allowed to return to Kyoto. We can only speculate why this delay was necessary, since the political situation in Kyoto was so intriguing and there are no official records left. It is safe to assume, however, that his uncle's destiny, as mentioned above, necessitated this unusual delay.

In the tenth month of 807, Kukai reported personally to the court with the sutras and ornaments he had brought from China. He was given permission to reside at Makino-Osanji in the district of Izumi, where he had had his original experience of conversion. The first lecture on the Shingon doctrine was delivered by Kukai at Kume temple before the scholars of the established schools of Buddhism in Nara. Kukai chose this temple because he knew that popular legend associated the Kume temple with Subhakarasinha, and this was the temple where he had discovered the Mahavairocana-sutra

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[1]Matsumoto, op. cit., p. 131.

for the first time. He won many disciples through his lectures, especially Jitsuye, a member of the same Saegi family, who later became the abbott of Toji (Shingon) temple. While Saicho antagonized the leaders of Nara, Kukai succeeded in maintaining good relations with them. He visited Nara and renewed his acquaintanceship with Gonso, who had been his master while he was a novice. In 808, Kukai was exempted from taxation by government order. In 809, Emperor Heijo became sick and abdicated, and Emperor Saga (Heijo's younger brother) occupied the throne. In the same year, Kukai paid a visit to Mount Hiei and met Saicho. By this time, Saicho was a well-known leader of the Tendai school, which claimed the Shingon teaching as a part of the Tendai structure. Although there is good reason to believe that Saicho and Kukai had until this time evaded each other, it became necessary for them to work together. Kukai sent his nephew, Chisen, to Mount Hiei for preliminary negotiation. Saicho and Kukai studied together, but each maintained his headquarters separately, and there was a tension between them toward the end of their careers. In the meantime, Kukai developed a friendship with Wake Mazuna, possibly through the introduction of Saicho. Through the influence of Mazuna, Kukai was ordered to reside at Takao-san Shingo-ji near Kyoto, where Saicho had earlier performed bodhisattva ordinations. Saicho sent his disciple, Kyochin, to Takao-san in order to borrow several Shingon sutras from Kukai. Kukai's younger brother, Shinga, joined him in 809. Under Emperor Saga, Prince Takaoka, the son of ex-emperor Heijo, became the heir-apparent, and Fujiwara Kadomaro, who had traveled to China with Kukai, became Takaoka's tutor.

Through these contacts, Kukai became influential in court circles. In 810, Kukai made a trip to the mountain district of Koge, where as a wandering mountain priest he had spent some time in his youth. The local legend tells us that this was where En-no-gyoja had practised mountain discipline. Kukai built a temple and called it Kokiji; during the construction of this temple, Prince Shotoku is said to have appeared to Kukai in a dream. In the same year, Kukai was called to the court, together with the prelates of the old established schools. Each school presented its essential doctrine. Kukai not only defended the case of the Shingon, but Mahavairocana manifested himself through the person of Kukai. This was called Sokushin-jobutsu or "this body becoming a Buddha," and its theological argument will be discussed later. Shortly after Kukai's appearance in the court, Lady Kusuriko persuaded ex-emperor Heijo to revolt against the throne. Kukai, at the request of Emperor Saga, performed a Shingon votive service of Hoso-chokyu, Kokudo-an-on or "prolongation of the throne and the safety of the nation" at Toji temple. During this ceremony, it was reported that Hachiman-dai-bosatsu or Bodhisattva Hachiman and Takenouchi-no-sukune (a popular hero who had been the military commander of Japanese expedition to Korean peninsula) appeared to Kukai. After the rebellion was defeated by court army, the crown prince Takaoka, the son of the rebellious ex-emperor Heijo, was ordered to become a priest, and he became a disciple of Kukai. The time was ripe for Kukai to publicize the Shingon doctrine, and he sponsored a votive service for the peace of the nation at Takao-san temple, reciting the Ninno-sutra for this purpose. The Shingon at this time did not

claim to be a Buddhist school, but rather a secret society, crossing denominational lines. The True Word was an additional spiritual blessing, as it were, and priests of established schools did not react against the Shingon teaching as much as they did to the Tendai teaching of Saicho. Nevertheless, the Shingon was becoming a favorite religion of the court. About this time, Kukai was given a seat at Todaiji, Nara, which had been the national cathedral in the Nara period. Kukai played both ends well; on the one hand, he allied with Saicho, and on the other hand, he managed to maintain his rapport with the prelates of Nara. In 811, Kukai gave the transmission of Two Parts (Ryobu in Japanese) to Jitsuye, who was only twenty-five years of age.

The syncretistic trend of Kukai became evident when Emperor Saga and Kukai received Shinto abhiseka (which was unknown in earlier Shinto but was adopted by Onakatomi-no-Kiyomaro and became a popular rite in the Miwa school of Shinto) in 811. Kukai is said to have written a poem:

> Among various ways to become a Buddha
> The most potent way is
> Kami-no-michi (or ways of gods).[1]

Emperor Saga, who was fond of literature and calligraphy, found mutual interest with Kukai. Kukai presented many copies of Chinese poems and paintings to the Emperor. The Emperor in turn arranged to move Kukai to Otokuni temple, which was closer to the court. But after a short stay, Kukai asked permission to return to Takao-san. In 812 or 813, Saicho visited Kukai and asked for the Shingon ordination. According to the Shingon custom, any per-

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[1]Matsumoto, op. cit., p. 161.

son, priest or lay, is allowed to receive abhiseka, and Wake Mazuna, Wake Nakayo, and Mino Tanendo, high court officials, received the ordination from Kukai too. Saicho attempted to ally with Kukai at this time and assisted him financially. Saicho's disciples--Encho, Kenyei, Konin, Kocho--and priests from the old established schools in Nara also came to receive instruction in the Shingon teaching. Among the disciples of Saicho, Taihan was thoroughly converted to the Shingon school and refused to return to Mount Hiei; this caused the previously mentioned estrangement between Saicho and Kukai. In 813, Kukai and Nakatomi Harai, a Shinto priest, wrote the Ryobusho or "Theory of Two Parts" which Kukai later developed into the theory of Ryobu-Shinto (in 822). Kukai appointed his disciples--Gorin, Jitsuye, and Chisen--to be jointly in charge of Takao-san. He became closely identified with the Fujiwara oligarchy and assisted Fujiwara Kadomaro, who was the Japanese ambassador to China when Kukai went abroad. The Left-Minister (Sadaijin), Fujiwara Fuyutsugu, wished to build Nanyendo (Round Temple of the South) within the compound of Kofukuji, a temple which had been built by Fujiwara Fubito. Kukai was requested to dedicate Nanyendo for the prosperity of the Fujiwara family and he consented. In this connection, the legend tells us about the appearance to Kukai of the deity of Kasuga Shinto Shrine, which was a family shrine of the Fujiwara. Thus, Kukai made followers among court circles and the Fujiwara family. But so far, the Shingon teaching had not become a separate sect or denomination. In order to be a full fledged school, the Shingon theological system had to be systematized and a central monastic school established. Kukai attempted to estab-

lish a monastic school before he attempted to systematize the Shingon theology. We follow Kukai's life and work according to the ballad, Namudaishi:

37. When first he began to open up Mount Koya, after he had found on a pine tree the vajra he had thrown and after the sword had come out from the earth, then indeed he knew that the place was the seat of ancient Buddhist worship.

38. Not only did he make the pool of Tochi in Sanuki, but in other places also he made pools. In addition to bridges and piers, he repaired a great number of bridges.

39. In order to save men from the plague he preached the inner meaning of the Heart-Sutra [Prajnaparamita-Hridaya-sutra]. The roads were filled with men that had been raised from the dead; the whole land enjoyed the blessings of peace.

40. He founded the temple upon Mount Bandai and placed there as his successor the priest Furuichi from Tsukuba. He subdued the wilderness of Mount Futara and called the place Nikko.

41. He was anxious that the flowers of literature should flourish among our men of the Land of the Day-spring, and composed in the letters of our country a poem on the four verses of the Tathagata.

42. The doctrines of S'akyamuni are eighty-four thousand in all, the last being the teaching on Nirvana which Buddha himself gave. The most important of these have been thus interpreted.

"Life's naught, Death's naught," said Shaka. "E'en today,"
Said Kobo, "have we crossed the mountain-pass
Of true existence."
Shaka: "Now with joy
Nirvana's peace we enter."
"Life's a dream,"
Said Kobo, "Death, the waking of the Soul
From some poor drunkard's nightmare misery."

43. "All things are full of change," said Shaka's self.
"The flowers, that fragrant bloom, will change and droop,"
Said our Sage Kobo. "Life is but death" became,
To Kobo, "Who can hope to live for aye?"

44. Thus any man who can write the Kana characters of the Iroha [the first three characters of the Japanese syllabary], whether he understood their meaning or not, becomes the disciple of our great Sage, and received the happiness that comes from the Law.

45. This syllabary he founded on the Sanskrit alphabet, which we venerate as sacred, and arranged according to the principles of Nirvana, handing it down to us in a word-picture of fifty syllables. Thus he provided for the education of future generations.

46. Basing his action on the expressed wish of the Emperor Saga, he founded in the Toji Temple at Kyoto a shrine for the worship of Hachiman, where he worshipped the god and laid upon him the duty of protecting the Imperial House.

47. The god of Inari [the Shinto god of rice] appeared on Mount Fushimi and received from Kobo's hand the sacrifice he offered. "Together, you and I," he swore, "we will protect this people."

48. When there was a drought, he received an order from the Emperor, and made supplication for rain in the Imperial Garden of Shinsen-yen. Then the Holy Maidens and the Naga Princess appeared, and there was a gentle rain over all the land.

49. To Kenne, who had been his companion on his visit to China, he entrusted the sacred globe as an object of worship. "This," said he, "has been consecrated by many mystic enchantments."

50. He mastered all the five branches of knowledge; he studied the whole of the ten Pitakas. He was proficient in painting and in sculpture, and in order to promote the intellectual welfare of his countrymen he founded the Shugei-shuchi-in.

51. During the second week of the first month in every year, there is held in the Imperial Palace a Festival of Prayer for the reigning Emperor. This was instituted by him; it was a most magnificent festival, and was maintained for a thousand years, even to the days of Meiji.

52. On one day after the twentieth of the third month of the second year of Jowa (A.D. 835) he foretold that he should die, and leaving behind him a hundred esteemed and valuable instructions, departed this life.

53. For those whose affectionate desire should draw their minds to the Sage in after years, the prince painted a portrait of him. The prince [the ex-Crown prince, Takaoka] did indeed paint the face, but the eyes were painted in by the Sage himself.

54. When he died it was as though a bright light had gone out in the midst of a black night. Thousands of his followers, lay and priestly, followed him weeping to the graveyard of Okunoin in Koya.

55. And what have the Emperor Saga and the Sage between them?

There had been some compact between them, for, lo! when the Emperor died, his coffin was mysteriously borne through the air to Koya, and Kobo himself, coming forth from his grave, performed the funeral obsequies.

56. Then did the Emperor Uda himself, wisely following his father's footsteps, receive from the Sage's hand the sacred Baptism, and thus set a good example for succeeding ages.

57. Eighty years after his decease, an Imperial Messenger opened the gate of his sepulchre. His hair, they found, had grown long upon his head; they shaved it off and gave him a change of garments.

58. The Emperor that reigned in the days of Engi (i.e. Daigo) was deeply impressed by the lessons of his life, and honoured him with the title of Kobo Daishi.

59. When Shunnyu, the Imperial Messenger to the Temple in which our great Sage is worshipped, was unable to see the face of the Sage, the Sage himself guided the worshipper's hand to touch his knee. Never, as long as he lived, did the messenger forget that feeling.

60. The Emperors Kwampyo and Shirakawa, the retired Emperor, Go-Uda, and several others of our rulers had such faith in the Sage's merits that they made pilgrimages to Koya to worship at his sanctuary.

61. Verily the teaching of the Tathagata of the Dharma Kaya (the Spiritual Body) has been handed down without change and without break; through the long chain of our patriarchs the lamp of light has been handed down to us.[1]

Saicho founded his monastic school early in his career, and he attempted to convert the nation from Mount Hiei. Kukai, on the other hand, stayed close to the capital until 816, when he asked permission to establish the Shingon monastery at Mount Koya. In his youth, Kukai had wandered in this mountain district, which continues to this day as the center of Shukendo. En-no-gyoja, the founder of Shukendo, was reported to have disciplined himself in Mount Omine, not far from Koya.

According to the Shingon-den, Kukai was met by a hunter

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[1] Lloyd, op. cit., pp. 251-256.

who was accompanied by two black dogs. After leading Kukai for a while, the hunter disappeared and a goddess appeared to him. She was Nifuzu-hime and the hunter was her son, Koya-daimyojin.[1] This legend emphasized that the mountain deity of Shinto approved of Kukai's establishing a Buddhist monastery. At any rate, the court gave Kukai permission to occupy an area surrounded by Mount Mani, Mount Nagamine, Mount Ojin, and Mount Uda. Kukai immediately sent two of his trusted disciples, Taihan and Jitsuye, to begin preliminary work at Mount Koya. Kukai, however, stayed at Takaosan and continued his activities. His former master, Gonso, visited Takaosan and received Shinto ordination. When Emperor Saga became ill, Kukai performed a votive service for seven days at Takaosan and sent the consecrated water and medicine to the imperial palace. In 817, Kukai, accompanied by Chisen, went to Mount Koya and laid the monastery cornerstone. It is said that at Mount Koya Kukai wrote:

> Within the quiet forest,
> Alone in the straw-thatched hut,
> So early in the morning
> I hear the sound of a bird.
>
> It sings of the Triple Treasure,
> 'Tis the Bu-po-so.
>
> The bird has a voice for singing,
> A man has a mind for thinking,
> The voice and the mind,
> The clouds and the stream,
> Express the Buddha-wisdom.[2]

As Saicho pacified Sanno (Shinto deity) at Mount Hiei,

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[1]Washio, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

[2]Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "Poems by Kobo-daishi," The Eastern Buddhist, V (1931), 312.

Kukai paid proper respect to Nifuzu-hime and Koya-daimyojin, the patron deities of Mount Koya. Legend attributed to Kukai the authorship of the Japanese alphabet, commonly known as Iroha, which he taught the workers who constructed the monastery at Koya. In 819, an epidemic threatened the lives of people in many parts of the country, and Emperor Saga copied the Prajnaparamita-haridaya-sutra (in golden ink on blue paper) himself and ordered Kukai to pray for healing. Kukai came down from Mount Koya and lectured on the Prajnaparamita-haridaya-sutra and prayed for the healing of the sick. His lecture notes are preserved and are known as Hannya-shin-kyo-hiken. In 819, the bell tower, the lecture hall and the sutra hall at Mount Koya were completed. The monastery was named Kongobuji by Kukai.

A controversy arose between Saicho and the prelates of Nara concerning the validity of ordination. As previously mentioned, Saicho claimed that the traditional ordination was no longer needed for his followers so long as they conformed to the Bodhisattva Ordination. Gomyo, the priest of Daianji, Keishin of Todaiji, and Shuyen of Kofukuji, together with other leading priests at Nara protested to the court attacking Saicho's claim. Saicho, on his part, wrote the Kenkai-ron, or "validity of ordination," attacking the narrow theological position of the Nara leaders. Kukai's attitude in regard to this controversy was very peculiar, though understandable. He was supported by the Fujiwara family and the court, he maintained working relationship with Saicho, and had followers among priests of the old established schools at Nara. There is good reason to believe that the delay in giving permis-

sion to the Tendai to establish their ordination hall at Mount Hiei was suggested by Kukai himself. No doubt, Kukai was sympathetic with the new Buddhist movement initiated by Saicho, but he was attempting to transform the old schools from within with the Mantra faith and practice. Therefore, he could not afford to take part in the heated debate. Instead, in 820 he set out on a journey with his disciples--Gorin, Shinzei, and Kankai. Responsibility for Mount Koya was given to other disciples, Jitsuye and Shinnen. Kukai visited Shuzenji Izu, the district of Shimozuke, Mount Futara (which he renamed Nikko), the district of Aizu (the present Fukushima-prefecture), and returned to Kyoto via the district of Hokuriku. During his absence, the title of Dento-daihoshi (the great teacher of Dharma) was conferred on him by the court. In 821, Mabito Hamatsugu, who was in charge of construction of an irrigation pond in the district of Sanuki (Kukai's native place), requested the court to send Kukai to assist in the work. Kukai, accompanied by his nephew Shinnen, visited home and helped complete the pond, which became known as Manno-ike. Upon return from this work, he dedicated the portraits of Seven Mantra Patriarchs--Nagarjuna, Nagabodhi, Vajra-bodhi, Subhakarasinha, Amoghavajra, I-hsing, and Hui-kuo (the portraits of Nagarjuna and Nagabodhi were reported to have been painted by Kukai himself). In 822, he persuaded the court to establish a Shingon hall within the compound of Todaiji, Nara, where he prayed for the prosperity of the nation, and gave the Shingon ordination to ex-Emperor Heijo. Heijo's son, Prince Takaoka, became a disciple of Kukai. (The prince was known as Shinnyo-shinno; his activities were restricted even as a priest,

and after the death of Kukai, he left for China and India.) Also in 822, Saicho died at Mount Hiei. After the death of Saicho, the leadership of the new Buddhist movement was solely in the hands of Kukai. It is generally believed that he wrote Juju-shin-ron or "Ten stages of spiritual growth," in 822, systematizing Buddhism synthetically from the Shingon perspective (some scholars claim that Juju-shin-ron was written in 831, however).[1] In 823, Emperor Saga received the Shingon ordination from Kukai. In the same year, Toji temple was given to Kukai with the specific understanding that only the Shingon priests were to live there and that Toji was to become the Kyo-o-gokoku-no-tera, the temple for the protection of the country.[2] Thus, the Shingon school became de facto a national religion. Also in 823, Saga abdicated and Junna became the emperor. Fujiwara Fuyutsugu, then head of the Fujiwara oligarchy, and Yoshimine Yasuyo, the commander-in-chief of the army also received the Shingon ordination. In 824, a drought meant possible danger from famine. Kukai was ordered to pray for rain at the imperial garden of Shinzen-yen for seven days. The rain came and Kukai was promoted to Sho-sozu or prelate. In the same year, ex-emperor Heijo died and was buried by Kukai and Prince Shinnyo. In 825, Kukai spent much time on the institutional organization of the Shingon school; he renamed Shingwanji Shingokokuso-shingon-ji or "Shingon temple for the protection of the nation" and placed twenty-one Shingon priests there; he placed his disciple Kenye as the abbot of Murou temple in the district of Yamato and built Kongoshoji

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[1]Matsumoto, op. cit., pp. 207-208.

[2]Tokyo Teikokudaigaku, Kongoji-bunsho (Tokyo: Teikokudaigaku press, 1920) VII, 1.

temple at Ise. His nephew and disciple, Chisen, who had been slated to be Kukai's successor, died at the age of thirty-seven. Kukai wrote the dedication for the Masuda irrigation pond in the district of Yamato. In 826, he celebrated Dainio-ye or votive service for the protection of the king and nation at the Lower Temple of Koyasan. (The Lower Temple was located at the foot of Mount Koya, outside of the monastery proper, and later Kukai's mother and his cousin, Ato Mototada, lived here. It is to be noted that four other members of the Saegi family moved to this district and were given minor local positions.) Ex-emperor Saga asked Kukai to lecture on the Lotus sutra for the commemoration of the late emperor Kwammu. Also in the same year, a pagoda was built at Toji temple. In 827, a drought lasted throughout the summer, and the emperor ordered Kukai to lead an invocation ceremony, asking for rain by reciting Daihannya-kyo or Mahaprajnaparamita-sutra. The ceremony lasted for three days without any success. Kukai carried the Buddha relics, which had been kept at Toji temple, into the court and sprinkled them with holy water. The rain came, and Kukai was promoted to Dai-sozu. In the same year, Kukai's old master, Gonso, died; Kukai recited Bommo-kyo or Brahmajala-sutra[1] for the occasion. Kukai's leadership was demanded both at Mount Koya and at Kyoto; therefore Kwanshinji temple was built at Kawachi so that Kukai could stay there en route. About this time, one of Emperor Junna's concubines, Manai, being converted to the Shingon teaching, left the court and dedicated her life to Buddhism. Two of her maids followed her example. The

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[1]Nanjio, A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka, p. 240.

emperor built a temple for them and it was dedicated by Kukai. Kukai named the temple Shinjuji or the temple of Incantation. In the meantime, Kukai's nephew, Enchin, came to Kyoto and was sent to Mount Hiei to be instructed by Gishin (Enchin was known as Chisho-daishi later).

In 828, Kukai, through the patronage of Fujiwara Fuyutsugu, founded a school and named it Shugeishuchi-in or Sogeishuchi-in. This private institution for general education reflects another side of Kukai. Educational institutions were known in Japan before his time; shortly after the introduction of Confucianism, the first Daigaku or college was established in the court for the children of clan leaders.

> The start of the great period of learning from China is conventionally dated around 552. . . . Prince Shotoku (572-621) to whom much of the vigor of this period is credited, fostered Buddhism actively and founded a Buddhist seminary. . . . Missionaries came from China and Korea to teach. Their converts and students went to the continent to study, and returning, became leaders in their respective fields.
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> By 646, the authority at court of the men who had been so educated was sufficient for them to institute the Taika Reformation, a sweeping reorganization of the governmental and much of the social machinery in an attempt to model Japan on the Chinese prototype. This represented the first systematic organization of a central government. Much of this reform failed, just as many of the borrowed elements of Chinese civilization do not appear to have penetrated beyond the educated groups of the capital area. Within the limits of these qualifications, however, the seventh and eighth centuries saw Chinese the official written language, Buddhism favored, and Chinese scholarship and social and political thought made at home in Japan.
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> After the Taikwa reformation, however, a local Japanese educational system began to take form. In the middle of the seventh century, a Department of Higher Education (Daigaku Ryo) was established in the government of the Japanese court. In 701 A.D., Emperor Temmu promulgated the Imperial Edict (Taihoryo) usually considered the start of a real system of formal education. This Edict provided for an organization of lay schools, modelled on those of China and for the training of civil officials, while a parallel educational ladder for the education

of priests in Buddhist temples and monasteries was envisaged. In the civil system, a central college was set up at the capital and a series of lower schools provided for in the provinces, with students of special ability being allowed to proceed from the lower schools to the college. The department of Higher Education was responsible for the administration of this system. Only the sons of officials were allowed to enter civil training. Thus, though the purpose of this education was to provide replenishment for the newly-established Chinese type of bureaucracy associated with a strong, central government, its effect was to reinforce the hereditary conception of political power.

The complete development of this system is not clear, but by 794 the college and affiliated schools were operating and provincial schools were in existence, giving courses in the classics, the lunar calendar, astrology, music, law, Chinese medicine, mathematics, and calligraphy. These public institutions were supported financially by land grants, interest on public loans, and private contributions.

Outside of these government and clerical schools, during the eighth and ninth centuries, private schools, also apparently affiliated with the central college, were established in Kyoto for the education of members of the Court families. In the same period, libraries are noted for the first time.[1]

Schools for the aristocratic families in the early Heian period included Kwangakuin for the Fujiwara, Shogakuin for the Arihara, Kwangakuin for the Tachibana, and Kobunin for the Wake. As already mentioned, a monastic school was founded by Saicho at Mount Hiei. Saicho envisaged a complete identification of religion and education, and to him the one qualification for entering his monastic school was not intellectual brilliance but religious vocation. To be sure, Saicho found affinity between bodhisattvahood (Buddhist goal in Mahayana Buddhism) and superior man (Kunshi in Japanese, which is the Confucian goal); thus implicitly he allowed study of non-Buddhistic subject matter. But his stated aim of monastic education was the training of religious men. Therefore, Saicho left the training of civil leaders to secular colleges the

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[1]Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Civil Information and Education Section, Education in the New Japan (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948), I, 15-17.

underlying principles of which were Confucian, while he regarded it his duty to train religious leaders. In comparison with the Tendai monastic school, Kukai's Sogeishuchi-in was not primarily a school of Buddhistic study. To him, both religious and secular education were to be administered by the Shingon. The purely religious leaders were trained at his monastery at Mount Koya, which did not pretend to be comparable with the Tendai school at Mount Hiei. In addition to this religious institution, Kukai endeavored to establish a private school where Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist truth values were taught. In this sense, his educational principles reflected the idea of his earlier work, Sangoshiki, in which he tried to apprehend truth values of the three religions. To Kukai the necessary qualification for entering Sogeishuchi-in was intellectual brilliance, because a purely religious vocation led on to his monastery at Mount Koya. Rather, the purpose of Sogeishuchi-in was the training for leadership, both secular and religious, because to him both were one and the same thing. Thus he says in Sogeishuchi-in-shiki (motto of his school): "the rise and decline of any institution depends ultimately on the personnel, and the rise and decline of any person depends basically on the teaching."[1] In other words, good personnel are needed both in religious and non-religious fields. The healthy growth of religion presupposes a well-cultured society, and vice versa. To this end, Kukai chose his candidates from all social strata. With this aim, Sogeishuchi-in was established in Kyoto rather than in an isolated place. For the same reason, he invited teachers from all circles,

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[1]Kaneko, op. cit., p. 46.

not only from Buddhist groups. Kukai's uncle, Ato Otari, who at one time was the tutor to Prince Iyo, became the administrator of Sogeishuchi-in. In a sense, Kukai's ideal was modelled after the Chinese civil service curriculum, which he must have studied personally while in China. But such a system was not compatible with a situation where political positions were monopolized by a few leading families, especially the Fujiwara. And although the Fujiwara family patronized Sogeishuchi-in at first, the school did not function too well and was closed only thirty years after its establishment.

In 829, Kukai visited Nara to sponsor the eightieth birthday feast of Gomyo at Todaiji. Gomyo was a Hosso priest who had been promoted to the rank of Sojo or bishop in 827. He had fought bitterly against Saicho in 819 on the question of the validity of ordination at Mount Hiei. However, Gomyo never attacked Kukai who performed Mantra ordinations outside of Nara. Also in 829, Kukai was given a chair at Daianji where his former master Gonso had lived. In 830, Emperor Junna ordered all the prelates to present their doctrinal statements. Gomyo of the Hosso school presented Kenshinsho, Fusan of the Kegon school Ichijo-kaishin-ron, Gishin of the Tendai school Gishu, Genyei of the Sanron school Daigisho, and Buan of the Ritsu school Kairitsu-denraiki. Some scholars believe that Kukai presented his Jujushin-ron on this occasion.[1] In 831, Kukai asked to be relieved of the position of Daisozu or archbishop, because of recurring illness. Also in that year, he wrote an article, pledging his devotion to the shrine of the Sun-goddess

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[1]Koyasan-Kongobuji-Kinen-daihoye-jimukyoku, op. cit., p. 38.

of Ise. He also received a petition from twenty-six priests at Mount Hiei, including Tokuyen, Nangaku, Genben, Kaiyen, Jishun, Jitetsu, Jiyei, Jitsuen, and Nanryo, asking for the transmission of Taizo. The petition was written by Encho.[1] In 832, the emperor went to Saisho-e, after which he went to the Shishinden (the throne hall of the palace) and requested the prelates to pray for his welfare.[2] The emperor asked the prelates--Kukai, Gomyo, Shuyen, Buan, and Myofuku--to hold a discussion and presented them with imperial robes. Also in that year, Kukai held a Shion-no-Mando-e at Mount Koya.

> The term Shion, "four favours," means the favours received from one's parents, all living beings, the king of the country and the Triratna, or those of one's parents, teachers or elders, king and donators, or those of Heaven and Earth, king and parents. The favours of the living beings are those of the parents of innumerable generations. Donators are those who gave presents of valuable things, compassion or the Law, thus giving wealth or joy or the blessings of Buddha's doctrine. The Shion are also the favours of one's father, mother, the Buddha and the priests who expound the Law, or those of the Empire, the King, one's teachers and parents.
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> The text of the Gwammon (. . . "votive document," composed to explain the donator's intention in performing sacrificial ceremonies), entitled Koya-san Mando-e Gwammon, informs us that it was a Mando Manke no e, a "festival of ten thousand flowers" (sacrificed to the Buddha), celebrated by Kukai and the Kongoshi (. . . Vajraputra, Vajra-sons, i.e., the Shingon priests) in Kongobuji, the main sanctuary of Koya-san. The main image of the Kondo of Kongobuji being Yakushi Nyorai, the offerings were apparently made especially to this Buddha. The priests made ("presented") the four kinds of wisdom-mudras of the mandalas of the two departments (ryobu no mandara shishu no chi-in . . .), i.e., of the Kongokai and the Taizokai. These four wisdom-mudras, shichi-in . . . are that of the Great Wisdom . . . Maha-jnanna mudra, the Samaya . . . jnana-mudra, the Dharmajnana-mudra . . . and the Karma-jnana-mudra. . . . Kobo Daishi considered these mudras to be identical with the four kinds of mandalas, shishu mandara. It was established that one such festival should be held yearly as a thanksgiving for the four favours. . . . His vow should last as long as Emptiness, the living beings and Nirvana lasted (i.e., for ever).
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> We learned from this text that it was not only a festival

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[1]Matsumoto, op. cit., p. 222. [2]DeVisser, op. cit., I, 315.

of light, but also of flowers; that Kukai celebrated it as a mystic thanksgiving for the four favours, and that he intended to make it a yearly ceremony. Even nowadays a Mando-e is held on the 24th day of the 12th month in the Golden Hall of Kobo's sanctuary, and "ten thousand lamps" always burn, night and day, before his shrine.[1]

Kukai ordered Shinzei to succeed him at Shingoji, Takao-san, and Jitsuye to succeed him at Toji (Kyo-o-gokokuji). It appeared as though he was preparing for his death, and he confined himself at Mount Koya. His disciples and friends begged him to return to the capital, but he decided to stay in retreat and meditation, staying away from nourishing food. He declined the invitation of Fujiwara Yoshifusa, the minister of the court. In 833, Emperor Junna abdicated and Prince Masayoshi became Emperor Nimmyo. Kukai's disciple, Gorin, came from the district of Izu and joined Kukai in meditation. In 834, Kukai was ordered to hold *Sandan no Mishiho* or "August ceremony of the three altars" for the new emperor. It was a Shingon ceremony for the new emperor started in the court of T'ang. Kukai spent seven days in the first month of that year in the Naidojo or court chapel, which was renamed *Kyuchu-Shingonden* or the "Shingon chapel in the court"; the order of the service was copied from the T'ang service, which Kukai had studied under Hui-kuo. Kukai suggested to the court that this service be repeated henceforth for every new emperor, and it was so ordered. (However, in 876, when Emperor Yozei ascended the throne, this service was considered superfluous. Emperor Horikawa in the year 1086 shortened the service to one night in the first year of the reign of a new emperor. Often this service was neglected, but one of the emperors of the northern court, Go-Kogon, restored it in

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[1]*Ibid.*, I, 241-243.

the year 1352.) It lasted until the reign of Emperor Meiji, who discontinued the custom. The same service, however, has since been performed at the Shingon temple (Toji) Kyoto.[1] Kukai is said to have given parts of his Go-yuikoku or will in 833. The western sanctuary at Mount Hiei was completed and Kukai, together with Gomyo, led six priests--Jitsuye, Shinzei, Shinga, Doyu, Shinnen, and Emmyo--in the dedication ceremony. This was an indication of the close relationship between the Tendai and the Shingon. In the ninth month of 834, Kukai, accompanied by his disciple Gorin, wandered on Mount Koya and chose the spot where he would be buried. Then he visited Toji temple and gave the transmission of Two Parts (Ryobu in Japanese) to Jitsuye and Shinga. In the eleventh month of the same year, he called his disciples and announced that young Shinnen (thirty-two years of age) would be his successor at Mount Koya, assisted by Jitsuye, abbot of Toji temple. In 835, Kukai officiated at the seven day Mishiho at the Shingon chapel in the court. He bade farewell to Emperor Nimmyo as well as to ex-emperors Saga and Junna before returning to Mount Koya. On the fifteenth day of the third month of 835, Kukai calmly announced that the end of his life would come on the twenty-first day of the same month. He ordered Shinnen to write down the twenty-five articles of his Go-yuikoku, and seven disciples--Jitsuye, Shinzei, Shinga, Shinsho, Kenye, Shingyo and Shinnen--certified it with their signatures. On the nineteenth day of that month, it is reported that a crow with golden eyes and green nails flew in and was transfigured into a human being. Shinnen reported that he must

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[1]Koyasan-Kongobuji-Kinen-daihoye-jimukyoku, op. cit., p. 42.

have been a messenger of the Sun-goddess. On the twentieth day of that month, Prince Shinnyo (Prince Takaoka) painted the portrait of Kukai. On the twenty-first day of that month, Kukai died. It is reported that three thousand disciples gathered at his death bed. Seven days after his death, his body was buried in the spot Kukai had chosen. Ex-emperors Saga and Junna sent personal messages of mourning.

In 836, Kukai's disciples, Shinzei and Shinnen, secured permission to accompany Japanese ambassadors, Fujiwara Tsunetsugu and Ono Takamura, to the court of T'ang to report the death of their master at the grave of Hui-kuo. The ships were damaged by a storm and this mission was not accomplished. However, in 838, when Engyo of Gangoji visited China, a letter was sent in his care. The priests of Ch'ing-Lung temple at Ch'ang-an, where Hui-kuo had been abbot and where Kukai had studied, acknowledged the letter and in return sent relics of Hui-kuo and some rare Shingon ornaments. These items have been preserved at Mount Koya. Twenty-two years after his death, Kukai was conferred posthumously the title of Daisojo or Supreme Bishop, and twenty-nine years after his death Emperor Seiwa conferred the title of Hoin-daikwajo or "great master of the Dharma." Finally Emperor Daigo honored Kukai with the title Kobo-daishi, by which Kukai has been known to this day.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHINGON SCHOOL

Introduction

The term Shingon (Chen-yen in Chinese) means "true word." It is a translation of the Sanskrit term mantra which means a mystic doctrine that cannot be expressed in ordinary words. Shingon literature was known in Japan during the Nara period, and Kukai was attracted by its esoteric teaching and practice before he visited China in 804. The foundation of the Shingon-Ritsu school at Saidaiji temple is sometimes attributed to Kanjin, but it is more probable that he was responsible only for the Ritsu doctrine and that the admixture of Shingon is a later addition.[1]

> One must not forget that there exist two forms of the mystic doctrine; namely, the Taimitsu and Tomitsu. The former is the mysticism handed down by the Tendai School and the latter transmitted in the Toji Monastery of the Shingon School. They are not altogether different, but in practice the Tomitsu is a special school for it seems to be much more thorough-going than the Taimitsu, while in theory neither side seems to concede in any way. For example, they agree in their treatment of the Buddhas, Sakyamuni and Mahavairocana, and further in the application of it to the Shinto, 'the Way of Gods,' of Japan. Those who would study the relation of Buddhism with Shinto should clear up this point, for the Shinto name of Ryobu ('Double Aspect') and Ichijitsu ('One True') originate from the difference of ideas in these two mystic schools.[2]

As mentioned earlier, Saicho (Dengyo-daishi) founded the

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 337.

[2]Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 143-144.

Japanese Tendei school and taught the Lotus doctrine, Shingon mysticism, the Zen meditation, and Vinaya practices. Basically, however, Saicho's position had two sides, depending on the Tendai doctrine philosophically and esoteric practice religiously. According to the Tendai teaching, Buddha is really a man and yet the Truth itself. Therefore, to the Tendai school, Mahavairocana (Dainichi in Japanese) is the aspect of Buddha's personality expressed by the term Dharma-kaya (Hosshin in Japanese) or the Truth-body; the historical Buddha Sakyamuni was but one adaptive manifestation, and this aspect of Buddha is called Nirmana-kaya (Wo-jin in Japanese) or the Condescension-body. From the viewpoint of historical Buddhology, the Tendai's position is a safe one. The Shingon school, on the other hand, claims that Mahavairocana alone taught esoteric Buddhism or the Shingon teaching, while Buddha Sakyamuni taught the apparent teaching (Ken-gyo in Japanese), and that they are not to be identified as the Tendai school claims. The Tendai school claims that the Mahavairocana-sutra (Dainichi-kyo in Japanese) and the Saddharmapundarika-sutra or Lotus sutra teach the same truth. But the Shingon claims the superiority of the Mahavairocana-sutra above all other teachings of historic Buddhism.[1]

> The doctrine of this sect is a great secret law. It teaches us that we can attain to the state of the 'Great Enlightened,' that is the state of Buddha, while in the present physical body which was born of our parents (and which consists of six elements, Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Ether and Knowledge), if we follow the three great secret laws regarding Body, Speech and Thought.
> The Tathagata Mahavairokana (Dai-nichi Nyorai) in the state

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[1]Sato, op. cit., p. 30.

> of his Dharma-kaya or 'spiritual body,' preached the doctrine of the secret Mantras or true words (Shin-gon) to his own subjects, in order to show the truth understood by him. This doctrine is recorded in these sutras such as the Mahavairokanabhisambodhi-sutra (Dainichi-kyo), and the Vagrasekhara-sutra (Kon-go-cho-kyo), etc. Although there are numerous words in these sutras, yet the essential point is nothing but the Mandala or the 'circle' of the Two Parts (Ryo-bu) of Vagra-dhatu (Kon-go-kai) and Garbha-dhatu (Tai-zo-kai). The Mandala is, therefore, the body or substance of the doctrine of this sect. In the assembly called Ji-sho-e ('self-nature-assembly') in which Buddha preached the law, Vagrasattva (Kon-go-satta) received the secret Abhiseka (Kwan-jo), i.e., the initiation by sprinkling water upon the head, as the sign of the successor in the Law.[1]

From this legendary beginning of the Shingon school the element of secrecy has always played a prominent part in the doctrine, and its entirety is taught only to initiated, because certain religious truths and practices can only be taught orally and known by secret communication between teacher and pupil. The Shingon school is often called the doctrine of the Dharanis and the Secret Teaching of all the Tathagata. Historically, Buddhist esoterism has been classified into two kinds: (1) pure esotericism (Jummitsu), which is the teaching of Vairocana in Dharmakaya and of which the scriptures par excellence are the Mahavairocana-sutra (Dainichikyo) and the Vajrasekhara-sutra (Kongochokyo); (2) mixed esotericism (Zomitsu), which includes the other esoteric schools and blends the teaching of Vairocana with that of vulgar Buddhism. In this sense, all the esoteric books other than the Dainichikyo and the Kongochokyo belong to the Zomitsu.[2]

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[1]Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 78-79.

[2]R. Tajima, Etude sur le Mahavairocana-sutra (Paris: Librairie d'Amerique et d'Orient, 1936), p. 8.

As mentioned earlier the Shingon school claims that the teachings of the Buddha given out in his lifetime are divided between Kengyo or revealed teachings and Mikkyo or unrevealed teachings. The former includes doctrines of the Hosso, the Sanron, the Tendai, the Kegon, the Jodo, and the Zen; Kengyo teaches how to become a Buddha by practicing for many years. Mikkyo is said to be his own teaching or the direct speech of the Dharmakaya Vairocana; it teaches Sokushinjobutsu or "becoming a Buddha at once in this very body." This secret teaching was imparted by Mahavairocana, but Sakyamuni, in samadhi or deep meditation, understood, taught, and practised it. In this sense, it stresses the personal religious experience, not unlike the Zen experience, and the initiated in the Shingon teaching is able to abide in the ultimate state by practising the Three Secrets (Sammitsu in Japanese). Thus, the Shingon teaches not how to proceed from a lower state to a higher one but how directly to reach the samadhi of Buddha.

The Shingon mandalas (mystical diagrams) symbolize the spiritual and visible universe--the totality of things. The underlying principle of this school is that everything possesses an exterior and an interior, or an exoteric and esoteric aspect, and that the ultimate truth of the universe also follows this law. Mention should be made of the Shingon pantheistic principle that all creatures and all things have a common origin made of the same spiritual essence as Buddha himself. In this sense, Mahavairocana himself may be considered a metaphysical entity and universal essence. Nothing exists but as a part of Mahavairocana. The world is but the play of his light. Since all beings and all things are

of the same essence, and since logical reasonings, discussions, and dialectics touch only the surface of things, the Shingon school urges its followers to strive to feel and to understand the cosmic life and to become conscious of the intimate and universal communion by acts of mystical value and by the use of symbols, incantations and formulas: "We are not foreign elements created by an exterior force and thrown into the cosmos. We are the cosmos, and the cosmos is ourselves."[1] Therefore, in the Shingon teaching, there is only one reality, the one in which all have an individual and conscious part.

In addition to the crosswise division of Buddhism into revealed and unrevealed teachings mentioned above, the Shingon also teaches the lengthwise division based on the ten stages of thoughts. Kukai, utilizing the "Ten Minds" in the Mahavairocana-sutra, tabulated all the religious teachings in ten stages, or Jujushinron.[2]

> But the most remarkable feature in Kobo Daishi's scheme of spiritual development . . . is that whereas in the first nine stages we are concerned only with the evolution of thought which is assumed in most systems of philosophy, both Eastern and Western, to be the only means of discovering or attempting to discover the mystery of the Universe, in the tenth and highest stage this principle is suddenly supplemented or perhaps superseded by another which is called respectfully the esoteric or secret doctrine and disrespectfully magical ritual. It is closely connected with the use of the two Mandaras, of which it is exceedingly difficult to give any coherent explanation. A Mandara, the Sanskrit word Mandala, means a circle or assemblage of persons in a limited space and thence a picture, round or more often quadrangular, divided into several compartments in which are arranged a number, often very considerable, of deities for whom are sometimes substituted the Japanese forms of Sanskrit letters known as Shuji

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 96-104.

[2]Nanjio, A Short History of The Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, p. 83.

or seed, a translation of bija, the Sanskrit name given to letters which are mystically used to express the name of a deity. A mandara in this restricted sense appears to be a Japanese invention and is usually formed of a silk kakemono with figures painted in colours, though apparently some of the oldest Mandaras are woven. But evidently it is only the technical details of construction which are Japanese, the whole idea of the Mandara, the name itself, the use of Sanskrit letters, and the figures of deities which are simply Hindu and not specifically Buddhist, are all obvious indications of an Indian origin.[1]

We shall investigate, therefore, the earlier development of esotericism in India.

Indian Background of the Shingon

According to the Shingon school, the Tathagata Mahavairocana preached the Shingon teaching at first. In the assembly in which Sakyamuni preached the law, Vajrasattva (Kongo-satta in Japanese) received the law. Afterwards, Nagarjuna (Ryumyo in Japanese) saw Vajrasattva in the iron tower in South India, and received the secret doctrine from him. Nagarjuna transmitted the law to his disciple Nagabodhi (Ryuchi in Japanese), who transmitted it to Vajrabodhi or Kongochi. In 720, Vajrabodhi and his disciple Amoghavajra (Fuku-kongo in Japanese) arrived at China. Hui-kuo studied under Amoghavajra, and from him the law was transmitted to Kukai.[2]

It is extremely difficult to trace the historical development of Buddhism in India. We know, however, that Mantra and Dharani came into Buddhism from the Brahman background. When the primitive inhabitants of India were developing a sort of magical system, they came in contact with the Aryans, who brought with

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 344.

[2]Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 78-80.

them philosophical speculation and magical practices. The Aryans came with their Vedic chants and sacrifices, and the rules for the performance of such sacrifices were elaborate. The meanings of the words were rapidly forgotten, but the use of the rituals were considered to carry with them superhuman merit. In the course of time, these chants and songs brought by Aryans were arranged into the four Vedas. Although Buddha Sakyamuni was a repudiator of Brahmanic orthodoxy, he was not entirely free from current superstitious beliefs. In his time, people were steeped in absurd superstitions and sought short-cuts to salvation through the practice of self-mortification and the use of mantras. Sakyamuni did not venture to forbid magical practices altogether. In the Brahmajala Sutta we find a number of esoteric sciences which were current in the time of Sakyamuni and condemned by him as crooked, but he evidently regarded some other esoteric sciences harmless if not helpful. In the Manjusrimula-kalpa, composed in the first century of the Christian era, we read an astonishing number of Mantras, Mudras, Mandalas and Dharanis. Later on, in the Guhyasamaja, which is considered as the first systematic Tantric work of the Buddhists written probably in the third or fourth century, we find Buddha saying to the congregation that as the people were not sufficiently enlightened he did not preach the Tantric system openly. From the Pali literature it may be inferred that Sakyamuni believed in the doctrine of Iddhis or supernatural powers, and that he mentioned four Iddhipadas--Chhando or will, Viriyam or effort, Cittam or thought, and Vimamsa or investigation. In the Vinaya Pitaka we find stories of Bharadvaja and a lay-householder which deal with

how to perform miracles. Soon many Tantric books developed in Buddhism in the form of Sangitis; they are said to have been delivered by Buddha in an assembly of the faithful. Through this form of Sangitis many new ideas and practices were introduced into Buddhism. The Tantric works were popular among monks who resented the strict and unnatural rules of discipline in the Buddhist Sangha. These monks attempted to reach salvation without foregoing the pleasures of the world, and they devised plans in secret and handed them down through successive chains of perceptors and disciples who could practise the rites only in secret. These Tantric books showed easy methods leading to happiness in this world and ultimate salvation. They taught the merits to be gained by the repetition of the mantras and dharanis and by worship of innumerable gods and goddesses. When the Mahayanists became weaker in India, these Tantric Buddhists, known as Mantraists or Vajrayanists, dominated the scene until Buddhism in India was swallowed again by Hinduism.[1]

> To the Mahayanists is ascribed the introduction of Dharanis into the sacred texts. How to reconcile this with the statement by Huen Thsang that the Mahasanghikas possessed a Dharani-Pitaka from the very beginning of their sect? Unless we repudiate the truthfulness of the report altogether, we are driven to the conclusion that the Mahayanists did not invent the Dharanis, but only appropriated them as an integral part of their system. . . . It would be rash to deny the relative trustworthiness of the tradition current in India when the Chinese traveller visited the country.[2]

The decline of Buddhism in India began in the eighth century. By this time it was easy to find similarities between Bud-

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[1]Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism (London: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1932), pp. 2-25.

[2]H. Kern, Manual of Indian Buddhism (Strassburg: Verlag Von Karl J. Trübner, 1896) p. 6.

dhism, which was under the strong influence of Tantrism and sorcery, and Hinduism.

> The development of Tantrism is a feature that Buddhism and Hinduism in their later phases have in common. The object of Hindu Tantrism is the acquisition of wealth, mundane enjoyments, rewards for moral actions, deliverance, by worshipping Durga, the Sakti of Siva--Prajna in the terminology of the Mahayana--the Buddhist Tantras purpose to teach the adepts how by a supernatural way to acquire desired objects, either of a material nature, as the elixer of longevity, invulnerability, invisibility, alchymy; or of a more spiritual character, as the power of evoking a Buddha or a Bodhisattva to solve a doubt, or the power of achieving in this life the union with some divinity. There is an unmistakable affinity between Tantrism on one side, and the system of Yoga and Kammatthana on the other. Tantrism is . . . a popularized and . . . degraded form of Yoga. . . .
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> Taranatha informs us that Tantrism existed and was transmitted in an occult manner in the period between Asanga and Dharmakirti, but that after Dharmakirti's times the Anuttara-Yoga became more and more general and influential. Substantially his statement is certainly right. He adds that during the reign of the Pala dynasty there were many masters of magic, Mantra-Vajracaryas, who, being possessed of various Siddhis, performed the most prodigious feats.
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> The kings of the Pala dynasty, whose sway over Gauda and the adjacent regions lasted from about A.D. 800 to 1050, are known both from the annals and their inscriptions as protectors of the Faith. It was during that period that the monastery of Vikramasila was a reknowned centre of Tantric learning.
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> The Sena kings, who followed the Palas in the dominion over Eastern India, though belonging to a Hindu persuasion, were not hostile to the Faith. Still Buddhism declined during their reign, and more so after the invasion of the country by the Mohammedans in A.D. 1200. The monasteries of Udandapura and Vikramasila were destroyed; the monks were killed or fled to other countries. The learned Sakyasri went to Orissa, and afterwards to Tibet; Ratnaraksita to Nepal; Buddhamitra and others sought a refuge in S. India, whilst Sangama-Srijnana with several of his followers betook themselves to Burma, Camboja, &c.[1]

However, Buddhism did not disappear completely in the Magadha region, judging from a Buddhist stone inscription from Sravati which is dated 1276. But for all practical purposes, Buddhist Law was incorporated into Hinduism. Tantric Buddhism moved

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[1] Ibid., p. 133.

into Nepal as mentioned earlier. The Vajracaryas in Nepal were married men, and they read Tantras and Dharanis to increase their stipend and from a greedy desire for money.[1] Esoteric Buddhism was first introduced into Tibet about 640. In 747, the Tibetan king invited Padma-Sambhava, one of the most celebrated exponents of Tantric Buddhism. In 783, the peace between Tibet and China was signed, and Tibet was exposed to the influence of Chinese Buddhism; this was the time when Amogha flourished in China and introduced the Mantrayana system of Chen-yen.[2] Between the tenth and twelfth centuries, Tibet was exposed to the strong influence of the Vajrayana or Mantrayana of Northern India, Kashmir, and Nepal. The form of Buddhism prevalent in Tibet has been called "Lamaism" after its priests. Although it has been curiously incorporated with Tibetan mythology and spirit-worship, its doctrinal system has been consistently that of the Vajrayana.[3]

Buddhist esoterism developed from two different centers--the monasteries of Nalanda and Vikramasilas. The school of Nalanda was a development of Mahayanist thought; it has been regarded an orthodox esoterism, founded on the Vinaya. The patriarch Subhakarasinha was a disciple of Dharmagupta at Nalanda, and Vajrabodhi entered the monastery of Nalanda in the year 680 to study the grammar or Shomyo-ron. The school of Vikramasilas was influenced by more vulgar ideas and practices toward the end of the eighth cen-

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 134.

[2] Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1921), III, 340.

[3] L. Austine Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1895) pp. 15-17.

tury, and it soon fell into the "esoterism of the left" or Sado-mikkyo. Although the two schools were interrelated and certainly had some basic affinities doctrinally, we have to distinguish between the two schools for our purpose. The Japanese Shingon school was not inspired by the "esoterism of the left," which could be traced to the monastery of Vikramasilas, but Tibetan Buddhism was largely inspired by it. The Chen-yen school in China during the T'ang dynasty and the Japanese Shingon school followed the Nalanda tradition, which was called Mahayanistic esoteric Buddhism.[1]

But how did Mahayanistic esoterism develop from the original Buddhism? Although Sakyamuni revolted against Brahman ritualism and sacerdotalism, shortly after his death he became invested with supernatural and legendary attributes. Then came the division between the Mahayana and Hinayana schools.[2] Now we shall examine the doctrinal development of Mahayana Buddhism which was conducive to the incorporation of esoterism. The central point of controversy between the Hinayana and the Mahayana was the question of yana or "vehicle" which was to carry adherents across the sea of life (Samsara) to Nirvana. Sakyamuni did not define Nirvana; he was satisfied when the truth of Nirvana dawned on him. In the Milinda Panho, we find an account of an individual when he attains Nirvana. Asvaghosa, in the first century A.D., compares Nirvana to the extinction of a flame. Then came the Madhyamika interpretation of Nagarjuna, who wrote the famous Examination of Nirvana.

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[1]Tajima, op. cit., p. 7.

[2]Ryukan Kimura, A Historical Study of Terms Hinayana and Mahayana and the Origin of Mahayana Buddhism (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1927).

I.

If everything is relative,
No (real) origination, no (real) annihilation,
How is Nirvana then conceived?
Through what deliverance, through what annihilation?

II.

Should every thing be real in substance,
No (new) creation, no (new) destruction,
How would Nirvana then be reached?
Through what deliverance, through what annihilation?

III.

What neither is released, nor is it ever reached,
What neither is annihilation, nor is it eternality,
What never disappears, nor has it been created,
This is Nirvana. It escapes precision.

IV.

Nirvana, first of all, is not a kind of Ens,
It would then have decay and death.
There altogether is no Ens
Which is not subject to decay and death.

V.

If Nirvana is Ens,
It is produced by causes,
Nowhere and none the entity exists.
Which would not be produced by causes.

VI.

If Nirvana is Ens,
How can it lack substratum,
There whatsoever is no Ens
Without any substratum.

VII.

If Nirvana is not an Ens,
Will it be then a non-Ens?
Wherever there is found no Ens,
There neither is a (corresponding) non-Ens.

VIII.

Now, if Nirvana is a non-Ens,
How can it then be independent?
For sure, an independent non-Ens
Is nowhere to be found.

IX.

Coordinated here or caused are (separate things),
We call this world Phenomenal;
But just the same is called Nirvana,
When from Causality abstracted.

X.

The Buddha has declared
That Ens and non-Ens should be both rejected.
Neither as Ens nor as a non-Ens
Nirvana therefore is conceived.

XI.

If Nirvana were both Ens and non-Ens,
Final deliverance would be also both,
Reality and unreality together.
Thus never could be possible!

XII.

If Nirvana were both Ens and non-Ens,
Nirvana could not be caused.
Indeed the Ens and the non-Ens
Are both dependent on causation.

XIII.

How can Nirvana represent
An Ens and a non-Ens together?
Nirvana is indeed uncaused,
Both Ens and non-Ens are productions.

XIV.

How can Nirvana represent
(The place) of Ens and of non-Ens together,
As light and darkness (in one spot)
They cannot simultaneously be present.

XV.

If it were clear, indeed,
What an Ens means, and what a non-Ens,
We could then understand the doctrine
About Nirvana being neither Ens nor non-Ens.

XVI.

If Nirvana is neither Ens nor non-Ens,
No one can really understand
This doctrine which proclaims at once
Negation of them both together.

XVII.

What is the Buddha after his Nirvana?
Does he exist or does he not exist,
Or both, or neither?
We never will conceive it!

XVIII.

What is the Buddha then at lifetime?
Does he exist, or does he not exist,
Or both or neither?
We never will conceive it!

XIX.

There is no difference at all
Between Nirvana and Samsara.
There is no difference at all
Between Samsara and Nirvana.

XX.

What makes the limit of Nirvana
Is also then the limit of Samsara.
Between the two we cannot find
The slightest shade of difference.

XXI.

(Insoluble are antinomic) views
Regarding what exists beyond Nirvana,
Regarding what the end of this world is,
Regarding its beginning.

XXII.

Since everything is relative (we do not know),
What is finite and what is infinite,
What means finite and infinite at once,
What means negation of both issues?

XXIII.

What is identity, and what is difference?
What is eternity, what non-eternity.
What means eternity and non-eternity together,
What means negation of both issues?

XXIV.

The bliss consists in the cessation of all thought,
In the quiescence of Plurality.
No (separate) Reality was preached at all,
Nowhere and none by Buddha![1]

But this concept of Nirvana, according to Nagarjuna, could not satisfy many people. The Madhyamika's interpretation of Nirvana, in short, was that Nirvana was nothing but Sunya, which was a condition about which neither existence nor non-existence, nor a combination of the two nor a negation of the two, could be predicated. In fact, it was not too far from the mystic silence of Sakyamuni. The rival Yogacara school agrees in many points

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[1]Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana, pp. 74-78; L.de la Vallee Poussin, "Madhyamikas," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, Vol. VIII (1916).

with the Madhyamika. All phenomena originate in the mind and nothing exists but the mind. According to this school, spirit and matter are one, and all external objects are the outcome of the one mind. The Yogacara system retained the term Sunya, but reinterpreted it with the positive element of Vijnana. (The Yogacara's concept of the Alayavijnana is a Sanskrit word meaning "store mind." The seeds of all phenomena and objects are comprehended and concluded in the Alayavijnana and when not in action lie latent. It is like a fine perfume, whose scent penetrates the innermost part and then extends to the outside.)[1] On the attainment of Nirvana, the individual neither attains complete extinction nor does he go out like a lamp nor pass into a condition which cannot be conceived. The Absolute thus becomes immanent to the phenomenal world; it is neither different nor undifferent. It is a spiritual Absolute or citta-dharmata.[2] In the course of time, a new doctrine was incorporated into the Yogacara, and the form of Buddhism which was based on this new doctrine of the Mahasukhavada became known as Vajrayana or the admant-vehicle. In the Vajrayana, Nirvana has three elements--Sunya, Vijnana, and Mahasukha. This triple combination of Sunya is termed Vajra, because it is firm and sound, unchangeable, unpierceable, impenetrable, incumbustible, and indestructible. The Vajrayana believes that Sunya is Niratma, a goddess in whose eternal embrace the individual mind (the Bodhicitta or Vijnana) is locked and there remains in eternal bliss and hap-

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[1]Beatrice Lane Suzuki, Mahayana Buddhism (London: David Marlowe, Ltd., 1948), p. 69; Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, II, 43-45.

[2]Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana, p. 33.

piness.[1] Eliot writes:

> I have already mentioned that various Bodhisattvas are represented as accompanied by a female deity, particularly by Avalokita and by Tara. The mythological and metaphysical ideas which have grown up round Siva and Durga also attached themselves to these couples. The Buddha or Bodhisattva is represented as enjoying nirvana because he is united to his spouse, and to the three bodies already enumerated [Dharma-kaya, Nirmana-kaya, and Sambhoga-kaya] is added a fourth, the body of perfect bliss [Mahasukha-kaya or vajra-kaya].[2]

The evolution of another concept of the Mahayana school centered around the notion of karuna or love. Sakyamuni taught his disciples to obtain Nirvana for themselves through their own efforts. But Mahayanists developed the notion of Bodhisattva whose essential qualities are four: (1) the virtue of creative adjustment born of wisdom (prajna) and love (karuna), (2) the virtue of morality by which the dignity of human life is preserved, (3) the virtue of tenderness towards others and of simple naturalness, (4) the virtue of sacrifice or vicarious atonement.[3] Thus, the methods followed by Hinayanists and Mahayanists for the realization of Nirvana were widely different. According to the Mahayanists, their compassion for suffering humanity actuates them to renounce their merits or even their own salvation, and as a reward for this selfless sacrifice they are able to remove the veil covering the transcendental truth and to become omniscient, as exemplified by Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. Unfortunately, the followers of the Mahayana among the masses could not appreciate the high ideal of the concept of Karuna. Nevertheless, they had to resolve day after day that they would devote all their energies and sacrifice every-

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[1]Bhattacharyya, op. cit., p. 27.

[2]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, II, 123-124.

[3]Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism (London: Luzac & Co., 1934), III, 51.

thing dear to them for the uplift of humanity. Everyday they repeated this pious wish, and it soon became mere lip service and a convention. A short-cut for reciting the sutras was even devised. For example, Astasahasrikaprajnaparamita was shortened to the form of Satasloki Prajnaparamita, in one hundred stanzas, so that people could memorize it. It was further reduced to Prajnaparamita-hrdaya-sutra, and again to Prajnaparamita Dharani, in a few unintelligible words, and this ultimately gave rise to the mantra of Prajnaparamita. The most extreme development was prayer-wheels, and by each turn the devotee could gain the merit of pursuing the sutra and the virtue of Karuna.[1]

From the above examination of the inner development of Mahayana Buddhism, we can see how easy it is for the Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhism to be incorporated into the Mahayana system, although in the end the Vajrayana is a repudiation of the original Buddhism. The Buddhology of the Mahayana resulted in radical change. In the Pali Canon the Buddhas antecedent to Gotama are introduced, much like ancient kings, as part of the legendary history of this world. But in the Lalita-vistra and the Lotus we hear of Buddhas, usually described as Tathagatas, who do not belong to this world but rule various points of the compass described as Buddha-fields (Buddha-kshetra). Somewhat later five of these non-earthly Buddhas--Vairocana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, and Amoghasiddhi--were formed into a pentad and described as Jinas or Dhyani Buddhas (Buddhas of contemplation). In the fully developed form

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[1]Bhattacharyya, op. cit., pp. 27-31; Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, III, 172-174; Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, III, 51.

of this doctrine these five personages are produced by contemplation from the Adi-Buddha or original Buddha spirit and themselves produce various reflexes, including Bodhisattvas, human Buddhas, and goddesses. The date when these beliefs became part of the Mahayana creed coincides with the development of the Tantric period in Buddhism.[1] (The female counterparts, Taras or Saktis, for the above five Dhyani Buddhas are Vajradhatvisvari, Locana, Mamaki, Pandara, and Tara.)[2]

> The most important of the five are Vairocana and Amitabha. . . . Vairocana . . . is the chief deity of the Shingon sect in Japan and is represented by the gigantic image in the temple at Nara. In Java he seems to have been regarded as the principal and supreme Buddha. The name occurs in the Mahavastu as the designation of an otherwise unknown Buddha of luminous attributes and in the Lotus we hear of a distant Buddha-world called Vairocana-rasmi-pratimandita, embellished by the rays of the sun. Vairocana is clearly a derivative of Virocana, a recognized title of the sun in Sanskrit, and is rendered in Chinese by Ta-jih meaning great Sun. How this solar deity first came to be regarded as a Buddha is not known but the connection between a Buddha and light has always been recognized. Even the Pali text represent Gotama as being luminous on some occasions and in the Mahayanist scriptures Buddhas are radiant and light-giving beings, surrounded by halos of prodigious extent and emitting flashes which illuminate the depths of space. The visions of innumerable paradises in all quarters containing jewelled stupas and lighted by refulgent Buddhas which are frequent in these works seem founded on astronomy vaporized under the influence of the idea that there are millions of universes all equally transitory and unsubstantial. There is no reason . . . to regard Gotama as a mythical solar hero, but the celestial Buddhas clearly have many solar attributes. This is natural. Solar deities are so abundant in Vedic mythology that it is hardly possible to be a benevolent god without having something of the character of the sun. The stream of foreign religions which flowed into India from Bactria and Persia about the time of the Christian era brought new aspects of sun worship such as Mithra, Helios and Apollo and strengthened the tendency to connect divinity and light. And this connection

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[1]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, II, 26-27.

[2]Kern, op. cit., p. 64.

was peculiarly appropriate and obvious in the case of a Buddha, for Buddhas are clearly revealers and light-givers, conquerors of darkness and dispellers of ignorance.[1]

The *Dhyani* Buddha and *Sakti* bring forth a number of *Bodhisattvas* who look after creation. Under the regime of each *Bodhisattva*, eight mortal Buddhas are required to appear in the world to preach the doctrines and help the people emancipate themselves. As to the theory of emancipation or salvation, *Tantric* Buddhism explains the condition of the *Bodhi*-mind in *Nirvana* as the embrace of a woman. Some *Tantrics* associate with women, whom they designate as *Saktis*, and their union is termed Yoga, which they said was a powerful agency for the attainment of salvation. They abused the concept of *Karuna* and stated that the *bodhisattva* is daily making untold sacrifices for suffering humanity; therefore, there is nothing that he should not do. They formulated the theory that these three worlds have been created by the Holder of the Thunderbolt[2] for the enjoyment and benefit of the worshippers. They further said that one who strives after salvation should always enjoy *Prajna-paramita*, or the perfect truth. According to some *Tantrics*, this *Prajna* resides in every woman. Such shocking theories were not taught publicly but were transmitted through an unbroken chain of *gurus* and disciples. Secrecy became the keynote of the Vajrayana.[3]

The Vajrayana seems to have had a closer connection with the Vijnavada than with the Madhyamikas, and tradition connects Asanga with the introduction of *Tantrism* into Buddhism. The best

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[1]Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, II, 27-28.

[2]Wadell, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[3]Bhattacharyya, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-35.

known works of Asanga are the Mahayanasutralankara and the Bodhisattvabhumi, both describing the career of a Bodhisattva. The progress of a Bodhisattva is traced through ten stages, in each of which he acquires new virtue and knowledge. Tradition states that many of the works ascribed to Asanga were really revelations made by Maitreya, the future Buddha, and some scholars think that this legend conceals the historical fact that a teacher called Maitreyanatha was his predecessor and the founder of the Yogacara.[1] The Yogacara taught that the realization of Sunya leads to the attainment of omniscience, or the quality of knowing all things. There are two kinds of obstructions, which, when destroyed by the realization of Sunya, lead to the attainment of omniscience. The first is called the Klesavarana, or the obstruction of sufferings, and the second is the Jneyavarana, or the obstruction hiding the transcendental truth. The first obstruction can be removed by the realization of Sunya. Feelings of attachment and hatred and other impure feelings are caused by thinking of the Ego as real, and the realization of Nairatmya (the doctrine that no being or object contains an unchangeable permanent self) destroys the Ego and its connection with the surrounding objects which are unreal. If intense meditation about Nairatmya destroys the thinking about Ego, Ego will not come up again in that chain of Vijnana or consciousness. The second obstruction is the want of perfect knowledge and the inability to impart perfect knowledge to others for their benefit. It can only be removed by constant meditation on Nairatmya with great reverence. Salvation for a Mahayanist is

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[1] Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, pp. 92-98.

difficult because it involves great sacrifice without the prospect of obtaining any reward. For even when omniscience is attained, one is required to employ all his religious merit for the uplift of suffering humanity until all creatures obtain salvation. The Vajrayana claims that if one's mind is directed towards the Bodhi, if one is able to perceive the inner nature of the outward phenomena of the world as Sunya, and if one makes ceaseless efforts to relieve the distress of all beings, one can attain perfection in this life, following the practice of the Mantra. For if the world is realized as nothing but a dream or as if set up by magic, and if the mind is free from all false reflections and is pure by nature, then it is faced with no obstruction for obtaining the Bodhi. In short, although the Vajrayana took into account some lofty philosophical theories of Buddhism and Hinduism, it was destined to repudiate the original tenets of Buddhism. But in so doing, it became popular among people of all social strata because it satisfied various types of people.[1]

In the sixth century and perhaps considerably earlier, Indian religions became infected by tendencies often called Saktism and Tantrism. It is almost impossible to define clearly the term Tantra, because many subjects come under this category. The Buddhist Tantras resemble Hindu Tantras outwardly, but their philosophical background differs greatly. With the full realization that there are exceptions, Eliot's classification of Saktism and Tantrism is useful.

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[1]Bhattacharyya, op. cit., pp. 35-42; A. A. Macdonell, "Literature (Buddhist)," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, Vol. VIII (1916).

It is well to distinguish the two [Saktism and Tantrism], for though they are commonly found together, Tantrism may exist without Saktism. It means a system of religious magic which employs such methods as spells and formulae without meaning in ordinary language, diagrams, combinations of letters, gestures, and every kind of mystic symbolism in words and actions. The theory underlying all these practices is that there is a force pervading the Universe which can be controlled by rites, especially by sound, just as electricity can be controlled by certain processes and by apparatus. The Tantric formula or dharani may be called a prayer, but it is supposed to act not as an appeal which may move a deity nor by bringing peace and comfort to the mind of him who prays but simply in virtue of the magic potency of the syllables which compose it. Saktism means the worship of a goddess, especially of a goddess conceived as energy and as the active and creative part of a divine couple, the male deity being regarded as relatively passive and as thought rather as action. Most Saktist sects advocate and practice immoral rites. . . . they invaded late Buddhism, especially in Bengal, and passed thence to Nepal and Tibet. . . . But to the credit of the Far East let it be said that except in these temples [Lamaist temples in North China] Buddhism hardly shows a trace of Saktism or phallicism in ritual or iconography. Neither was there much disposition to adopt the ritual called Sadhana, in which a devotee meditates so long and earnestly on the attributes of a Bodhisattva or Sakti that at last the worshipper and the object worshipped become one. But of tantric practices such as charms, gestures, and magic syllables, used either as aids to meditation or for their own sake, there is only too much.[1]

But Eliot is quick to recognize one exception in the Shingon school in Japan, where five female personages, corresponding to the five Buddhas, are mentioned: they are equivalent to the five Saktis of Nepalese Buddhism.[2] Bhattacharyya, on the other hand, makes the following observation concerning the concept of Tantra:

The Hindu will not call any work a Tantra which does not include the following subjects among many others: stories of the creation and the destruction of the world, mystic charms, description of the abode of gods and of holy places, the duties of men in the four stages of life and the position of the Brahmans, description of the abode of ghosts and other noctural beings, the mystic figures, the origin of magicians, the celestial trees, position of the stars, discourses on old stories, meanings of technical terms, vows and observations, differen-

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, pp. 96-97.

[2]Ibid., p. 97; Kern, op. cit., p. 64.

> tiations of purity and impurity, enumeration of the characteristics of males and females, an account of the duties of kings, the customs of the age, and the rules of law, besides other spiritual subjects. The Hindus distinguish this sastra from two others of a similar nature, which are known by the names of Agama and Yamala. They treat of certain subjects which are not covered by the description of the Tantra given above. . . .
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> In the definition given above it will be seen that speculations on alchemy, medicine, divination, astrology, horoscopy, and many similar pseudo-scientific subjects, which frequently make their appearance in the Tantric literature, are not included in the definitions of the word Tantra.
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> Similar features present themselves in the Tantras of the Buddhists. . . . To understand the bulk of the Tantric literature of the Buddhists, we must first take into account the fact that it is distributed among the three great divisions into which the later Buddhism was divided--namely, the Vajrayana, Sahajayana and Kalcakrayana. Besides these there are other minor Yanas with no marked individuality, such as the Tantra Yana, the Mantra Yana . . . which may be said to have originated from the Vajrayana--the principal Yana. . . . The Tantric literature was mainly written by the Vajrayanists, who called themselves Vajracaryas; and by the Siddhas, whose number is reputed to be eighty-four.[1]

A close identification of Saktism and Tantrism must have been a later phenomenon, due to the interrelation of Hinduism and Vajrayana. For, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, when Buddhism, itself deeply infected with Tantrism, was disappearing, Saktism was probably the most powerful religion in Bengal region. However, this identification was not universal. The more respectable Tantras show considerable resemblance to the later Upanishads such as the Nrisinhatapaniya and Ramatapaniya. They contain mantras (magical formulas) and mystic diagrams or yantras. This resemblance does not give us much assistance in chronology (for the later Upanishads cannot be dated accurately), except that it shows how the Tantras are connected with other branches of Hindu thought.[2]

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[1]Bhattacharyya, op. cit., pp. 51-53.

[2]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, II, 280-281.

A spirit which tolerated Tantric practices has been one of the characteristics of Buddhism. The worship of Hindu deities was seldom condemned nor was its efficacy denied, though at first Buddhism taught that such worship had nothing to do with the road to Nirvana. But charms consisting of meaningless words are found in the Lotus and form a large portion of the later sacred literature translated into Chinese by such authors as Vajrabodhi, and their successors.[1]

Probably the most important elements of esoteric Buddhism are the mystic syllables called the Mantras, to which we now turn our attention. They are of innumerable varieties, such as Bija Hrdaya, Upahrdaya, Puja, Arghya, Puspa, Dipa, Dhupa, Naivedya, Netra, Sikha, Astra, and Raksa. These words had for the most part, either lost their original meanings or were combinations of sacred words never publicly known. (Vedic hymns were also called mantras; but their meanings were understood.) The mantras of Vajrayana are developed forms of Dharanis, which existed in Buddhism from very ancient times.[2] Indeed, in pre-Buddhist India the belief was prevalent that words have a creative efficacy; this underlying notion resulted in the belief in the magical or sacramental power of mystic syllables and letters.[3] This belief produced the Brahmanic mantras, particularly the mantras of the Athava Veda, and early Buddhism did not reject mantras in their proper place. Thus, the deities present themselves to the Buddha and offer to teach him a formula which will protect his disciples from the attacks of evil

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 97. [2]Kern, op. cit., p. 6.

[3]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, II, 292-293.

spirits. The idea of a benevolent deity to be worshipped was a popular idea which became so strong that neither priests nor Bhikshus could ignore it, and in its ultimate result it is hard to say whether Buddhist or Brahmanic elements are more prominent.[1] Hsuan-tsang (or Huen Thsang) even states that the council which sat at Rajagriha after the Buddha's death compiled five Pitakas, one of which consisted of Dharanis, and it may be that the collection of such texts was begun as early as the collection of discourses and rules.[2] In esoteric Buddhism, the written spell was equally potent with the spoken.[3] The general use of the mystic OM symbolizing the Hindu Triad AUM--the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer--was brought into Buddhism. The Tantric cults brought with them organized worship, litanies, pompous rituals, and the excessive use of these mystic Mantras which gave this school the name of the Mantrayana. Charmed sentences of Dharani, which are said to have been composed by the several divinities themselves, are used as incantations for procuring their assistance in peril as well as in ordinary temporal affairs. And by means of these spells and Mandala, or magic circles, the divinities are said to help the devotee to reach the other shore. The legend that Nagarjuna received the esoteric system in two parts, Vajra and Garbhadhatu, from Vajrasattva within the iron tower in Southern India is obscure. The Mantrayana asserts that the state of the "Great

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[1]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, pp. 50-73.

[2]Kern, op. cit., p. 6.

[3]Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy, Trans. John W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), pp. 194-198.

Enlightened" or Buddhahood may be obtained in the present body (composed of the six elements) by following the three secret laws regarding the body, speech, and thought. The mere recital of mantras or dharanis, and their essential syllables (the germs or seed, so-called Vija) is held to be equivalent to the practice of the Paramitas and coerces the gods to give blessings on the devotees. Although these dharanis were introduced to supply the need for incantations, their use is based on the doctrine of Sunya. As existence is ideal, the name of a thing is equivalent to the thing itself, and of like efficacy are the Mudra (attitudes) of the fingers, symbolic of the attributes of the gods.[1] It is said that the mantras are only powerful when they are applied strictly in accordance with the rules. For instance, the mantras should not be repeated too quickly nor too slowly. The mind at the time of repetition should be free from all impure reflections and should concentrate on the letters of the mantra, which should be repeated so long as there is no tired feeling. The mantras are considered most sacred by the Vajrayanists; their accuracy was jealously guarded by them, in much the same way as the purity of the Vedic mantras was maintained by means of several ingenious devices. Mantras are usually composed in ordinary prose, but occasionally in an enigmatic language, the meaning of which is impossible to understand.[2]

Mention should be made of the development of the Mahayana concept of bhakti or devotion, which was not free from Tantric

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[1]Wadell, op. cit., pp. 141-147.

[2]Bhattacharyya, op. cit., pp. 58-59.

influence. Buddhism was never free from the idea of mystic wonder and wondrous gift which were to be acquired by pious works, by penance, and also by formulas, especially by contemplation. Shortly after Buddha's death, he was looked upon by his followers as a great magician, for it was impossible to guard against the infiltration of the common Hindu notion of the magic of benevolence. We find popular magic always condemned in principle, but worship and mysticism were penetrated with Hindu elements heavily laden with magic.[1] For instance, Santideva praises without reservation the use of dharanis for the pardon of sins, and Sukhavati sects place the highest spiritual advantages at the command of the man who knows how to worship Amitabha. Some of the objects of worship in the Mahayana bhakti are not Buddhist in origin; the demoniac origins of Vajrapani (guardian angel of Sakyamuni) are not forgotten, but later he was elevated to a high position in the pantheon. In order to perform a sadhana (the evocation of a god), the ascetic must be duly instructed by a guru, who to the disciple is the incarnation of Buddha himself.[2] As mentioned earlier, the most important items in these mystical performances are the knowledge of the bija, the mystic syllable which is the germ or seed of the god, and the knowledge of the Vidya or mantra which gives to its owner control over him. When the god has been summoned, the ascetic fancies that he is the god; the identity of the ascetic and the god is a metaphysical truism (he does not identify himself with the god, but he only realizes the identity).

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[1]L. de la Vallee Paussin, "Magic," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, Vol. VIII (1916).

[2]Edward J. Thomas, Early Buddhist Scriptures (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1935), p. 172.

As soon as the ascetic knows that he is the god, he possesses all the powers that belong to the god; any wish he utters in the proper form will surely be accomplished. In the mystic performances of the Vajrayana, Vajra ("lightening" is the original meaning, which was regarded as the weapon of Indra, Vajrapani, and the ascetic against human or demoniac enemies) is important. In the Vajrayana, Vajra assumes new meanings: (1) it designates the divine energy which is identified with "intelligence" (vijnana), and there are Vajrabodhisattvas, vajrayogins, and vajrasattvas or beings of vajra (the supreme being, the adibuddha is the vajrasattva par excellence); (2) on the other hand, vajra (with the variant mani) is mystic phrase for linga, the male organ. To this twofold meaning of vajra correspond two Tantric schools--right-hand and left-hand; both belong philosophically to an undisguised monism. While Mahayana states that all beings are "embryos of tathagatas" or future Buddhas, the Vajrayana claims that all beings are vajrasattvas; they also maintain that the nature of vajra is immanent in all beings and can be actualized by appropriate meditations and rites. Although we are mainly concerned with the right-hand school, we mention in passing that the left-hand school conceives the nature of vajra according to the Saivite pattern, while the right-hand school is nearer the Vedantic or Yoga tradition.[1] To the right-hand school belong the tradition of the Mahavairocanabhisambodhi, the Vajrasekhara, and the Japanese Shingon-shu.

Our knowledge of the early Vajrayanists is obscure, except

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[1] L. de la Valle Poussin, "Tantrism (Buddhist)," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, Vol. IX (1917).

to the extent that we may reconstruct some of the information gained from the Tibetan and Central Asian sources. It is said that one Nagarjuna studied under Saraha in the seventh century. Saraha or Rahulabhadra was born a Brahman in Eastern India. He is said to have worked miracles in the presence of King Ratnaphala and his Brahman minister and thereby converted them to the Buddhist faith. Afterward he became the high priest of Nalanda. It is also related that he visited Orissa, where from one Coveskalpa he learned the Mantrayana, and from there proceeded to Maharastra. He is said to have composed a large number of verses in Sanskrit, and their translations are preserved in the Tibetan Tangyur. Some scholars make him a contemporary of Dharmakirti, the teacher of Vajrabodhi. Another controversial figure is Nagarjuna, who is, of course, different from the author of the same name who founded the Madhyamika school. M. Wallesar in his The Life of Nagarjuna, from Tibetan and Chinese Sources has come to the conclusion that there was no such person as Nagarjuna; the Tibetan sources have hopelessly mixed up the two Nagarjunas. But there is no reason to throw out the possibility of a Vajrayanist Nagarjuna altogether; he is said to have composed a large number of Tantric works, some of which have been translated and preserved in the Tibetan Tangyur.[1] Although the accounts of both Saraha and Nagarjuna may be questionable, an organization of Mantrayana seems to have existed at Nalanda at the time of I-ching (or I-tsing, 634-713), for he himself is said to have been trained in the esoteric doctrine though he could not master it satisfactorily. With the decline of the Nalanda monas-

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[1]Bhattacharyya, op. cit., pp. 66-68.

tery, the esoteric school of Vaikramasilas became powerful; Tibetan Buddhism had special connection with Vikramasilas. As mentioned earlier, the school of Vikramasilas soon fell into left-hand esoterism, while the school of Nalanda taught the Mahayanistic esoterism based on the Vinaya and was technically called the Diamond Vehicle Vajrayana.[1] According to the accounts of the School of the Diamond Vehicle Vajrayana, Subhakarasinha (637-735) studied at Nalanda university. He was a Sramana of Central India (probably Orissa) and a descendant of Amritodana, an uncle of Sakyamuni. He studied Buddhist concentration (yoga), dharani, and mudra (fingers inter-twining) at Nalanda where Dharmagupta presided, and then he started for Kashmir and Tibet and at last came to Ch'ang-an in 716, bringing with him many Sanskrit texts. After Subhakarasinha came Vajrabodhi (663-723) who also studied at Nalanda. He was a Sramana of the state of Malaya or Southern India and was a Brahman by caste. At the age of fifteen, he went to West India and studied logic for four years under Dharmakirti, but he returned again to Nalanda where he was ordained. For six years he studied the Vinaya text and Madhyamika doctrine under Santabodhi, and for three years he studied the Yogacara of Asanga, the Vijnaptimatra of Vasubandhu and the Madhyanta-vibhanga of Sthiramati under Jinabhadra at Kapilavastu, North India. Then for seven years he studied the Vajrasekhara (Diamond Head) and other mystical texts under Nagabodhi in South India. At last, he sailed to the southern sea and reached Loyang, China, in 720. He translated several important

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[1]Takakusu, op. cit., p. 142.

texts, including the Vajrasekhara. Vajrabodhi's disciple, Amoghavajra (705-774) was a Sramana of Northern India (and not a Singhalese as some scholars think) and a Brahman by caste. He followed his teacher to China. It is said that he mastered all the mystical doctrines and practices in twelve years. When Vajrabodhi died, he went to Ceylon together with his fellow students, thirty-seven in all, and visited a teacher, Samantabhadra, from whom he learned the doctrines of the Vajra-sekhara-yoga and Maha-vairocana-garbhakosa. With his rich collection of sutras he returned to Ch'ang-an in 746. Under his influence the Tantra doctrines dealing with talismatic forms and professions of supernatural power, first gained currency in China.[1] We also learn of Prajna, a Sramana of Kapisa in Northern India, who came to China via Central India, Simhala (Ceylon), and the Southern Sea. In 782 he came to Northern China, and in 786 he met a relative who had come to China before him. Prajna worked with a Nestorian priest Adam, and he also taught Sanskrit to Kukai who was studying at Ch'ang-an.[2]

Development of Mantra Buddhism in China

In considering the transmission of esoteric Buddhism from India to China, we must not fail to appreciate the importance of Central Asia, which was the earliest and on the whole the principal source of Chinese Buddhism. Indeed, teachers went to China by sea, and under the Yuan dynasty Lamaism was introduced directly

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[1] Nanjio, A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripitaka, pp. 443-448.

[2] I-tsung, op. cit., p. 224.

from Tibet. But from at least the beginning of the Christian era to the T'ang period, monks went eastward from Central Asia to preach and translate the texts, and it was across Central Asia that many Chinese pilgrims went to India in search of the truth.[1] The term Central Asia is used to denote the Tarim basin and its neighboring countries such as the Oxus and Badakshan. Tarim was in touch with Bactria, and its inhabitants included not only Iranian tribes but the speakers of an Aryan language. From the dawn of history warlike nomads continually passed through the country. Different religious schools--Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity, Zoroastrianism--were known in this region, and Lamaism was introduced when Tibetans became the predominant power in the Tarim basin in the eighth century. Intercourse between Central Asia and China was established early, for we know there was a Chinese military garrison there in the year 98 B.C. Unfortunately, their relations were often interrupted by political changes. During the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries northern China was divided among the Tartar states, and the influx of Buddhism increased. When the T'ang dynasty (618-907) reunited China, it reverted to the policy of keeping the western road open. The Turks in northern China were divided into two branches--the northern and western--at war with one another. The T'ang managed to defeat both branches of Turks and organized the Tarim basin into Four Garrisons. The Tibetans descended into the Tarim basin and defeated the Chinese in 670 and held the Four Garrisons until 692. In the meantime, the northern Turks rose again, and Islam appeared

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[1]Reichelt, Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism, pp. 36-48.

in the West. In the long reign of Hsuan-tsung, China waged double warfare against the Arabs and Tibetans until the Chinese were defeated in 751. The Tibetans dominated the Tarim basin for a century; they took tribute from China and when it was refused sacked the capital, Ch'ang-an, in 763. China made a treaty with the Tibetans in 783 and shortly afterwards made an alliance with the Uigurs who occupied the Turfan area (where Manichaeism was the state religion between 750 and 843). In the tenth century Islam became the dominant religion in the Tarim basin, and Buddhism disappeared.[1]

In 383 Fu-chien, Emperor of the Tsin dynasty, sent his general Lu-kuang to subdue Kucha. The expedition was successful and among the captives taken was Kumarajiva. Lu-kiang became the ruler of Southern Liang, and Kumarajiva served as his advisor. Kumarajiva was an Indian Sramana. His father went to Karashah, where he was married to Giva, a younger sister of the king of that country. Kumarajiva studied the Sarvastivada-vinaya but later became a Mahayanist. He arrived at Ch'ang-an in 401. From 402 to 412, he translated numerous works and also wrote a treatise in Chinese. He is said to have had more than three thousand Chinese priests as disciples. The fact that Kumarajiva became well learned in Mahayana Buddhism while in Kucha is significant in the history of Buddhism in Central Asia.[2] Hsuang-tsang visited the western frontier and India between 629 and 645. He observed that in Kucha there were one hundred monasteries and five thousand monks.[3] When

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[1]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, III, 189-200.

[2]Nanjio, A Catalogue of The Chinese Translation of The Buddhist Tripitaka, pp. 406-408.

[3]Reichelt, Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism, pp. 38-66.

the T'ang dominated Central Asia, Khotan was included in the Four Garrisons. Chinese political influence was effective in Khotan until the last decade of the eighth century. Our knowledge of the Buddhism in Central Asia is meager, but Khotan accounts relate that the Indian monk named Vairocana, who was regarded as an incarnation of Manjusri, went there from Kashmir. It is not clear whether this was the same Kashmiran monk Vairocana who was active in Tibet about 750. At any rate, this monk Vairocana is said to have introduced Mahayanism to Khotan. Though Kashmir is not known as a center of Mahayanism, it was a natural route for men and ideas passing from any part of India to Khotan. The Tarim basin and the lands of the Oxus were a region where different religions and cultures mingled, though we cannot prove that Buddhism was amalgamated with Zoroastrianism or Christianity there. Records show that the Prajnaparamita-sutra, the Lotus, and the Suvarnaprabhas were popular, and the last was translated into both Uigur and into Iranian Oriental. Also, dharanis were widely used in Central Asia. Curious, though understandable, was the admixture of Buddhism and Manichaeism; the Chinese edit of 739 accused the Manichaeans of falsely taking the name of Buddhism and deceiving the people. In some ways, however, the association of Taoism and Manichaeism was even closer. Nestorian Christianity also existed in the Tarim basin during the T'ang period; this coincides with the Chinese accounts of the Nestorian Church.[1] Although we cannot prove with certainty any foreign origin for some of the Mahayana and Vajrayana beliefs and practices found in China, we have

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[1] Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, III, 208-218.

to bear in mind that Buddhist ideas and teachers from India passed through Central Asia, where they came in contact with non-Buddhist religions. Reichelt makes the following assertion:

> Among the schools . . . we must briefly mention the mysterious Mi-tsung. It absorbed the . . . Vairocana School, known in China from the seventh century on by the name "The Great Sun Religion" (Ta-jih-chiao). The main writing for this movement was "The Great Sun Scripture" (Ta-jih-ching).
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> The wroship was concentrated upon Vairocana, the doctrine's representative. . . . Many of the attributes of Amitabha were ascribed to him, but on his own account also he gained much of the charm of saviourhood. In particular it was believed that he had a special power to help the lost souls in Hades.
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> Unmistakably some of the teachings of the Nestorian Church have gone into this system. On the other hand, Nestorianism also sought to adopt some of the outward characteristics of the "Great Sun Religion," the more easily to make its influence felt. It is clear that the official Chinese name of the church (Chin-chiao), "The Religion of the Great Light," is an allusion to the Vairocana School. The character for the adjective Chin is composed of the characters for the sun, as well as for "great" and "shining," a designation which for the people of that day must have directed the thought immediately to the "Great Sun Religion." But as both of these religions flourished about the same time, so they also had a parallel experience in time of persecution and decay. The Vairocana School was taken up in the other school, and now for many years it has therefore been difficult to find traces of its special characteristics.[1]

We cannot document the extent to which the religions in Central Asia influenced the Buddhist movement in China. But we learn that after the fall of the Han and the division of greater China into area states, there was a marked infiltration of Central Asian peoples into the Yellow River basin, and that area for a long period came under the rule of the Tobas, a people whose racial affiliation we cannot place. In spite of marked cultural differences between them, they and the indigenous Chinese managed to live alongside each other. In a real sense, the T'ang dynasty

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[1]Reichelt, Religion in Chinese Garment, p. 130.

unified greater China for the first time with far-reaching lines of communication, and we find a remarkable coexistence of varied religious systems during the T'ang period.[1]

Before we turn to the development of the Chen-yen (Shingon in Japanese) or Mantra school in China, let us briefly examine the introduction of Buddhism into China. Even before the officially accepted date of the arrival of Buddhism in China in A.D. 61, there was acquaintance with Buddhism in certain quarters. Under Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty (140-86 B.C.), Chang-ch'ien was sent to the regions bordering China on the West and south to confer with the tribes there. One of these journeys took him as far as Parthia, whose ruler then was Mithridates II. From this journey, Chang-ch'ien brought back an account of the golden image of Buddha. Emperor Ming sent a deputation to visit north-western India and to the district of Magadha which was a center of Buddhist relics and Buddhist literature. The deputation returned to Loyang in the year 67 with a number of these precious objects and two Buddhist priests. The two priests--Gobharana and Matagna--came to China with zeal and enthusiasm. Among the books they brought from India was a life of Buddha. In the following period much Buddhist literature was imported from India. This came mainly with the steady influx of Indian missionaries, who arrived at intervals for nearly seven centuries. But some Chinese also visited the holy land--namely, Fa-hsien in 399, Sung-yun in 518, Hsuan-tsang in 629, and I-ching in 671. Soon Chinese commentaries on the sutras appeared, and the catalogue of 518 contained 2,213

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[1]E. R. Hughes and K. Hughes, Religion in China, pp. 62-63.

titles of Buddhist writings. Although many of them were lost, China received the entire Tripitaka in the year 972. The first three hundred years after Buddhism's introduction into China are characterized by quiet and deep religious seeking. In the year 335 permission was granted for Chinese natives to take the monastic vow, and in Loyang alone forty-two cloisters were built. Under the Han dynasty even some of the emperors and princes took the monastic vow. Persecution was also experienced by the Buddhists, and under the first emperor, Kao-tsu, of the T'ang dynasty (620-904), 12,000 monks were sent back into civilian life.[1]

The inner development of Buddhism in China from its beginnings to the T'ang dynasty is summarized by Suzuki as follows:

> To ascertain definitely the character of the impact of Buddhist thought on the Chinese it is advisable to know what are the general of Chinese thought. As is well known, the Chinese are a practical people and their way of thinking is decidedly positivistic. They are strict observers of social convention. . . . Confucianism is their religion and philosophy. Confucianism was an incarnation of common sense and practical wisdom. There is in the teaching of Confucius no depth of thought, no flight of imagination, no soul-stirring religious emotion. He speaks of Heaven, but it is too far away from the everyday experiences of ordinary people. Heaven is the concern of the ruler and not of the ruled. The Way (tao) so-called is not necessarily heavenly, but rather earthly, for it means morality governing communal life. Confucius was idealized to a great extent, but it was he, no doubt, who struck the most vital point of Chinese psychology. When we know him, we know the Chinese.
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> It is true that we have Laotze, another great outstanding figure in the history of Chinese thought. . . . In some way Laotze can be said to have exercised just as much influence on Chinese culture as his rival Confucius. . . . Some scholars think that Laotze derived his teaching from India. . . . In contrast to the Confucian rigorism and conventionalism, Laotze is southern in his . . . attitude towards nature.
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> Confucianism however must be said to be quite characteristic of the Chinese mind . . . even Taoism, which appears at first as exotic and anarchic was transformed, once adopted by

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[1]Reichelt, Religion in Chinese Garment, pp. 101-105.

the Chinese people, into a form of legalism known as Fa-chia. The Fa-chia school emphasizes the importance of the laws in keeping society in order. . . . In fact, Taoism has given birth to two lines of thought which apparently go against its own original tendency; the one is Fa-chia and the other is the ultra-individualism of the Yang-chih philosophy.

The practical legalism of the Fa-chia as an off-shoot of anarchical Taoism breathes the li-fa spirit of Confucianism. The li-fa means rules of propriety, and is no more than the standardization of the moral or judicial spirit, which is no doubt an aspect of Chinese character.

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As Buddhism began to spread in the Middle Kingdom, one of the first objections raised against it . . . reflects the highly practical side of Chinese mentality. As far as its theoretical foundation was concerned, it had something that resembled Laotze's teaching. . . . The objection was that Buddhists did not work for their living. When they do not marry, they leave no issue, which means that their ancestral spirits are neglected and their line is discontinued. When they beg for food, they consume the earnings of other people who have to work extra hours to support idlers--which means the wasting of national wealth.

. . . .

When the Buddhists came from India with their pessimism and world-negating asceticism, the Chinese did not mind their theory as much as their practice--a practice running counter to the idea of family-perpetuation and of working one's livelihood.

. . . .

In the meantime the Chinese people could not remain indifferent to the philosophy of the Mahayana. There was something in it reminding them of Taoism. . . . The Buddhists were not slow to make use of the teaching of the Lao and Chwang school. This method of interpreting Buddhism was known as Ko-i, "expounding the sense." The first contact naturally took place between the Sunyata idea of the Prajna-paramita and the Wu of Taoism. But it is a great question whether Sunyata was properly understood by the Chinese philosophers until the arrival of Kumarajiva and the rise of his disciples. Among the first Mahayana texts translated into Chinese we find such sutras as the Prajnaparamita, Vimalakirti, Nirvana, Pratyutpanna-samadhi, Avatamsaka, and so on. The production of these translations must have been an extraordinary effort on the part of those who were actually engaged in the work. This can readily be seen in the translations themselves. The thoughts and feelings expressed in the sutras were so entirely foreign to the Chinese mind. . . . They were no doubt thunderstruck when the Mahayanists declared all things to be empty or void, or there were numberless worlds besides this earth. . . . The Laotzean followers were perhaps told that all things originated from nothingness (wu) but not that all things were Suchness itself or Emptiness itself. A long period of education was needed to be able to grasp the teaching of Mahayana

Buddhism as expounded in its sutras. Naturally there were some extra-ordinarily gifted minds among the Chinese even as early as in the fourth century. The greatest figure, however, who made Mahayana thought really acceptable or digestible for the Chinese was Kumarajiva, who came to Chang-an in 401. . . . During the twelve years that followed, aided by his able disciples, he translated thirty-five sutras and shastras consisting of three hundred fascicles.

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After Kumarajiva the great translator and expounder of the Mahayana was Paramartha (499-569) who came to South China in 546. . . . He was a scholar of the Mahayana Samgraha Shastra by Asanga and its commentary by Vasubandhu, which is an authoritative work on the Vijnamatra school of India. . . . It was not however until Chi-i (538-597) and Chi-tsang (549-623) of the Sui dynasty that the native Chinese doctors of Mahayana Buddhism formulated their own views of the Mahayana, basing them on the sutras and shastras. . . . Chi-i is the founder of the T'ien-tai (Tendai in Japanese) school, whose teaching is the development of the doctrine contained in the Saddharmapundarika, and Chi-tsang is the principal expounder of the shastras belonging to the Madhyamika school of India. His is known as the San-lun school (Sanron in Japanese), as it has adopted the three treatises of the Madhyamika as the basis of its teaching. It is practically an extension of the Nagarjuna philosophy.

Chi-i was one of the greatest Chinese Buddhist philosophers. Without him and Fa-tsang (643-712), the founder of the Avatamsaka school, Chinese Buddhism could not claim original contributions to the history of Buddhist thought.

. . . .

Chi-i's T'ien-tai system and Fa-tsang's Avatamsaka philosophy were thus their attempts to transform Indian Buddhism really into their own. . . . Chi-tsang's Madhyamika and Hsuan-chuang's Yogacara are fine works interpreting the ideas of the Indian masters for their countrymen.

. . . .

The teaching [of Avatamsaka] would not have made such profound impression on the Chinese mind if it did not go in company with Zen. Zen developed in China along with the Buddhist mysticism of Sunyata, partly spurred by the Lao-chwang idea of "doing-nothing-ness" (wu-wei), and partly in accomodation with the Confucian emphasis on practical life.

. . . .

The Mahayana in India became in China on the one hand Zen, Kegon, and Tendai, and on the other hand Jodo (ching-tu), the doctrine of the Pure Land. If Zen appealed to the practical intellectual side of the Chinese mind, Jodo met its spiritual cravings. . . . The Chinese people have been pursuers from the beginning of their history of the three desires: Bliss, Prosperity, and Longevity. . . . Bliss means perpetuation of the family life, while Prosperity and Longevity are, of course, matters concerning the individual. Buddhism did not oppose

> this outright, but taught the moral law of causation to attain this end. . . . For its real doctrine of salvation is to transcend causality, in other words, to make the transcendental power of Buddha work freely over the ignorance of all beings.[1]

It is precisely to these three desires--Bliss, Prosperity, and Longevity--that the Chen-yen teachings and practices appealed. Although in appearance the Chen-yen and the Zen seem to be opposite, there is a basic affinity between them; both the Chen-yen and the Zen emphasize the necessity of personal religious experience. The Chen-yen school in China never stressed the doctrinal aspect as did its sister school (the Shingon) in Japan. Nor did it ever achieve the status of a Tsung (demonination or school) in the fullest sense in China. What appealed to the Chinese mind was the use of spells, charms, and magical formulas, and the doctrine that since the universe is merely idea, thoughts and facts are equivalent. This doctrine, which found affinity with the magical practices and notions of early Chinese, produced surprising results when applied to funeral ceremonies, for it was held that ceremonial can represent and control the fortunes of the soul--that is to say, if a ceremony represents figuratively the rescue of a soul from a pool of blood, then the soul which is undergoing that punishment will be delivered.[2] It was not until the latter part of the eighth century that such theories and ceremonies were accepted by Chinese Buddhism and patronized by the imperial court. Since that time these ceremonies have not remained the monopoly of the Chen-yen school, rather they became an integral part of most

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[1]Beatrice Lane Suzuki, Mahayana Buddhism, pp. xxii-xxxvii.

[2]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, III, 318; J. J. M. De Groot, Religion in China (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), pp. 216-247.

Chinese Buddhist schools. Another characteristic of the Chen-yen, which did not prosper after the ninth century, was that it stimulated the rise of sacred societies.[1]

The early history of the Chen-yen is vague. According to the synoptic table arranged by Seigai Omura, before the works of Subhakarasinha, Chinese and Indian monks had already translated into Chinese ninety-six esoteric sutras, thirty-five sutras for dharani, and four commentaries; these were not exactly the forerunner of the Chen-yen but belonged to the mixed esoterism or Zomitsu.[2] The earliest record shows that Srimitra, an Upasaka of the country of Pai (Kucha, a state inhabited by a white race), translated in 373 four works in six fasciculi, of which three works in five fasciculi were already lost in 730. These were charms, cures, and other sorts of sorcery often containing some Mantra prayers and praises of gods or saints of higher grades.[3] It is quite possible that Hsuan-tsang (Hiuen-tsang, 596-664) was acquainted with the Mantrayana in India.

> In the year 629 the celebrated Hiuen-tsang set out on his journey to India to procure Sanskrit books. Passing from . . . the northwestern extremity of China, he proceeded westward to the region watered by the Oxus and Jaxartes where the Turks were then settled. He afterward crossed the Hindoo-kush and proceeded into India. . . . He completed the tour of the Indian peninsula, returned across the Indus, and reached home in the sixteenth year after his departure. The same emperor, T'ai-tsung, was still reigning, and he received the traveller with the utmost distinction. He spent the rest of his days in translating from the Sanskrit originals the Buddhist works

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[1] Reichelt, Religion in Chinese Garment, pp. 165-175.

[2] Tajima, op. cit., pp. 5-8.

[3] Takakusu, op. cit., p. 144; Nanjio, A Catalogue of The Chinese Translation of The Buddhist Tripitaka, p. 397.

> he had brought with him from India. It was by imperial command that these translations were undertaken. The same emperor, T'ai-tsung, received with equal favour the Syrian Christians, Alopen and his companions, who had arrived in A.D. 639, only seven years before Hiuen-tsang's return. . . . Hiuen-tsang remained five years in the monastery of Nalanda, on the banks of the Ganges, studying the language, and reading the Brahmanical literature as well as that of Buddhism.
> . . . .
> At the emperor's insistance, Hiuen-tsang now corrected the translation of the celebrated Sutra Kin-kang-pat-nia-pa-la-mi-ta-king (in Sanskrit, Vajra-chedika-prajna-paramita Sutra).[1]

Considering the fact that the monastery of Nalanda was the center of esoteric Buddhism in the seventh century, this inference is not far-fetched. I-tsing, as mentioned earlier, also visited Nalanda where he was trained in esoterism.

But the official introduction of the Jummitsu (pure esotericism)[2] began with three able Indian teachers who arrived in China during the T'ang period; their careers have already been discussed in connection with the Indian background of the Vajrayana. The first to arrive was Subhakarasinha (637-735) who came to Ch'ang-an in 716 where he was received by the emperor Hsuan-tsung (685-762). Wu-hing, a learned Chinese who travelled in India, met I-tsing at Nalanda and collected all sorts of Sanskrit texts. He died on his way home, but his collection reached Hua-yen monastery in Ch'ang-an. On hearing this, Subhakarasinha together with I-tsing selected some of the important texts and in 725 translated the Mahavairocana (Great Sun) sutra and others. There are five works ascribed to Subhakarasinha--Fo-shwo-hhu-khun-tsan-phu-sa-nan-man-ku-

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[1]Joseph Edkins, Chinese Buddhism (London: Trübner & Co., 1880), pp. 116-119.

[2]Tajima, op. cit., p. 8.

yuen-tsai-shan-sin-tho-lo-ni-khiu-wan-kh-fa (or "Law or rules spoken by Buddha for seeking to hear and hold the Dharani of the most excellent heart, and of fulfilling all prayers belonging to the Bodhisattva Akasagarbha"), Mahavairocanabhisambodhi, Subaku-kumara-sutra, Sisiddhikara-mahatantra, and Sushiddhikara-puja-kalpa. He wanted to return to India, but was not allowed to depart; he died in 735. The second important figure in the Chen-yen was Vajrabodhi (663-723), who sailed to the southern sea and reached Loyang, China in 720. There are eleven works ascribed to him--Kundi-devi-dharani, Vajra-sekhara-yoga, Pankakshara-hridaya-dharani, Avalokitesvara-kintamani-bodhisattva-yogadharma-mahartha, Sarva-tathagata-vajrayur-dharani, Prajnaparamita-ardhasatika, Vajrasek-haravimanasarvayogayogi-sutra, Vajrayur-dharani-guhyakalpa, Vajra-sekhara-yogacarya-vairocana-samadhikalpa, and Vajrasekhara-sutra--yogavalokitesvararaja-tathagata-karya-kalpa. In 741, while in Ch'ang-an, Vajrabodhi obtained permission to return to India, but on his way died in Loyang. The third figure, who introduced the Mantrayana into China, was Amoghavajra (705-774), commonly known by his abbreviated Chinese name, Pu-khun. In 719 he first arrived in China following his teacher Vajrabodhi. When the latter was dying, Pu-khun was instructed to go to India to collect some texts. Pu-khun and his pupils went to Ceylon and visited a teacher, Saman-tabhadra, from whom he learned the doctrines of the Vajra-sekhara-yoga and Maha-vairocana-garbhakosa. They returned to Ch'ang-an in 746. He was given permission to return to his own country in 749, but when he arrived at the South-sea district, he was ordered to stay in China by the imperial command. In 756 he was called back

to the capital. He was held in high veneration at the court of successive sovereigns of the T'ang dynasty; he was an instructor of Hsuan-tsung, Tai-tsung, and the three successive emperors. Under his influence the Chen-yen first became popular in China. He translated 110 different texts; among them was the most important text Rita-sangraha or Tattva-sangraha (i. e., Vajra-sekhara), commonly known as Diamond Head.[1]

Amogavajra played a prominent part in the elaborate ceremonies which were performed on behalf of the emperor's deceased mother in 758 and subsequent years, and it seems that it was from this date that the custom of holding services for the dead according to Buddhist rites was officially recognized.[2] This was an attempt on the part of Buddhist leaders to meet the spiritual needs of the Chinese, who traditionally paid reverence to their ancestors. It is quite possible that the Nestorian Church stimulated the Masses for the Dead, too, for the Nestorians offered such services seven times a day for both the living and the dead. The Nestorians also observed "seven times seven" days' festival with the closing fiftieth day of fasting annually. With statesman-like understanding, Amoghavajra quickly saw that it was important to outshine the Nestorians in this respect. After fifty years of work in China, Pu-khun (Amoghavajra) arranged his "opening night" for the great drama which has since become so well known in the East by the name of Yu-lan-pen or Yu-lan-pen-hui ("the feast for the wandering souls") taken from Sanskrit word Ullambana. The main object of this cere-

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[1]Nanjio, A Catalogue of The Chinese Translation of The Buddhist Tripitaka, pp. 443-448; Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 144-145.

[2]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 175.

mony is to conduct the souls as rapidly and safely as possible over the vast sea of want, hunger, thirst, and torment, which they get into when death overtakes them. When a man dies, if there are any rich relations, they order so many votive masses to be said in some temple or monastery, or they allow the chief room or courtyard in their homes to be temporarily made over into a prayer-hall. If there are no relatives to help the dead, the monks and pious people arrange such services. From the time of Pu-khun, it has been looked upon as a particularly meritorious act to contribute towards making the great "feast for the wandering souls" as splendid as possible. The observance of this festival is regulated by the Chinese cycle of years. The chief preparations are made on some open space, usually near a pond or a river. There altars are set up and filled with incense burners and jars of flowers. Near the altar is placed a large house of paper, divided into five rooms. The side rooms are supposed to be separate waiting-rooms for men and women who are on their way to deliverance. In smaller paper houses stand figures which give out food and clothes to the hungry spirits. There are also sixty-six shops where the spirits can provide themselves with all necessities. Money, consisting of stamped paper notes and imitation silver and gold bars, is sent to the dead in immense quantities; this is burned. The other world is then notified that the ceremony is to begin. Then begins the mass based on the Ullambana scripture.[1] Although Amoghavajra made Yu-lan-pen-hui or Avalambana (the feast for the wandering souls") a popular and important rite in the eighth century, the

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[1]Reichelt, Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism, pp. 77-85.

record shows that a similar service called U-lan-pan-chai ("vegetarian entertainment") was sponsored already in 538 by Emperor Wu Ti. Under Chen-yen and Taoist influences the "Vegetarian Entertainment" was intermixed with the Tantric Shingo-kwei (Segaki in Japanese) or "distributing drink and food to the Pretas," which was propagated by Amoghavajra. (Afterwards the same process took place in Japan; in both China and Japan the festival of the dead, celebrated in the seventh month of the old calendar, is a mixture of the two ceremonies.) The most significant influence of the Chen-yen on Chinese Buddhism was not doctrinal but ceremonial--elaborating the masses for the dead, for which the following sutras were used:

> Buddhabhashita-jvalamukha-preta-araitrana-dharany-rddimantra-sutra, "Sutra spoken by the Buddha on the dharanis and rddhimantras for saving the pretas," was translated in A.D. 695-700 by Sikshananda . . . a sramana of Khotan. . . .
>
> Nanjio No. 984 . . . "Sutra, spoken by the Buddha on the dharanis for saving the pretas," is the same text, translated A.D. 746-771 by Amoghavajra. . . .
>
> Amoghavajra also translated No. 985 . . . Yoga-mahartha-sang-raha-Ananda-paritrana-dharani-jvalavaktra (preta)-kalpa-sutra, containing many mudras to be used in saving the pretas by means of magic formulae . . . and No. 1467 . . . "The reason why (the Buddha) instructed Ananda with regard to the distribution of food to the Pretas, belonging to the collection of important Yoga matters."[1]

It is understandable that all these ceremonials, with pomp and splendor, must have impressed the visitors. Many Japanese monks busied themselves to imitate what they saw in China during the T'ang period. About the general picture of religion in China during that period, Hughes writes:

> These various movements flourished throughout the T'ang era. This was the time when with ample funds at their command

[1]De Visser, op. cit., I, 76.

> the great monasteries, containing thousands of monks in any one of them, were able to build up impressive rituals of various kinds. Visitors could see at fixed times of any day and night processions of monks swinging solemnly through the courts clad in their yellow robes, fingering prayer beads, their head shaven, showing their ordination scars. They could watch 'masses' for the dead being sung in the presence of the great image of Buddha. . . . They could go into the lecture halls and hear the doctors discussing some knotty point of faith or order. They could go into the libraries and mark the labour of copying and translating and commentating. They could penetrate into out-of-the-way corners and see devotees entranced in meditation.
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> . . . .
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> It could not fail to impress, whether the visitor came from the court or the great Yamen. . . . Happiness in this world was, indeed, a delusion for the majority, and it was the devotees of the mysterious law who knew the secret of finding eternal happiness, freed from man's oppression and the calamities of drought and flood and disease.
>
> This is not to say there was not another side to the picture. The monasteries might dispense alms on a great scale, but they became great landowners as lands were given to them by the devout, and they know how to charge high rents as well as the ordinary landlord. The monks claimed the right to ignore all courtesies to elders and could be fiercely self-assertive for the honour and safety of their community. The abbots cultivated prestige in court and Yamen, and by their claims of exemption from dues made taxes all the heavier for the ordinary citizen. Also the scandals incidental to community living at close quarters and to the practice of celibacy were unavoidable. The whole situation was comparable to that in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages.[1]

All through the T'ang period the triangular war between Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism continued. As a rule Confucianism attacked the other two as being superstitious, though sometimes Taoism was hostile to Buddhism, too. The relation between Buddhism and Taoism became closer when the contemplative school of Buddhism rose and found affinity with Taoism. Confucianism had established its claim to be the natural code and creed of the scholar and statesman. This picture changed somewhat when Buddhist and Taoist books were accepted as texts for the public

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[1]Hughes and Hughes, Religion in China, pp. 75-77.

examinations. The T'ang dynasty, though on the whole favorable to Buddhism, preserved this triangular tension throughout. In fact, the first emperor of the T'ang, Kao-tsu, was anti-Buddhist; the second emperor was more lenient. Dowager Empress Wu gave fanatical support to Buddhism, and after her death two monks were appointed to high office and orders were issued that Buddhist and Taoist temples should be built in every province. The early reign of Hsuan-tsung marked a temporary reaction against Buddhism, though later he became more tolerant in spite of his own Taoist leaning. In 751 a mission was sent to the king of Chi-pin; the staff included We-king or Dharmadhatu, who became a monk before returning to China. During this and the following centuries Hindu influence reached the outlying province of Yunnan directly through Burma. The splendor of the court of Hsuan-tsung ended in disaster and rebellion, but the T'ang dynasty rose again and continued for a century and a half. These middle and later T'ang emperors were often under the influence of eunuchs and magicians, yet the religious policy during this period was amazingly liberal, with many foreign religions introduced from Central Asia.[1] Emperor Su-tsung in 760, showed his attachment to Buddhism by appointing a ceremonial for his birthday, which was officiated in the palace. Su-tsung's successor, Tai-tsung, was converted to the Chen-yen by his minister Wang Chin. A high stage for reciting the classics was erected by imperial command, and the Sutra of the Benevolent King chanted and explained by the priests. This book was brought in a state carriage with the same parade of attendant nobles and finery

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[1]Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, III, 258-263.

as when the emperor left the palace. Although Kumarajiva had translated it earlier, Amoghavajra again translated it; in the new translation thirty-six dharanis are given towards the end of the seventh chapter. Amoghavajra made it one of the important sutras of the Chen-yen, as he did with the Mahamayuri sutra. Emperor Tai-tsung wrote a preface to Amoghavajra's translation.[1] Tai-tsung maintained many monks; he believed that by propitiating the unseen powers who regulate the destinies of mankind, and he could preserve his empire from danger at a less cost than that of the blood and treasure wasted on the battle-field. The Confucianist commentary, condemning the confidence thus placed in the prayers of the priests, remarks that to procure happiness or prevent misery after death, by prayers or any other means, is out of our power, and that the same is true of the present life. It has been mentioned earlier that Amoghavajra popularized the "feast for the wandering souls." Emperor Hsuan-tsung, in 819, sent mandarins to escort a bone of Buddha to the capital. On this occasion, Han Yu presented a strongly-worded remonstrance to the emperor--further evidence of the existence of inner tension which was characteristic of the religious scene of the T'ang period. In 845 a third and very severe persecution befell the Buddhists under the emperor Wu-tsung. By an edict of the emperor, 4,600 monasteries and 40,000 smaller edifices were destroyed. More than 260,000 priests and nuns were compelled to return to civilian life. Although there was a reversal of the state policy in favor of Buddhism later,

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[1] De Visser, op. cit., I, 119-122.

Chinese Buddhism never recovered from this heavy blow.[1] During the remainder of the T'ang dynasty there is little of importance to recount about Buddhism.

We have examined the development of Chinese Buddhism, especially the Chen-yen, up to the time of Amoghavajra. Mention must be made of I-hsing (683-727),[2] a pupil of Subhakarasinha (637-735). He was well versed in the way of Yin-yang, the Sanron, the Zen, the Tendai, and the calendar. He assisted Subhakarasinha in his translation of the Mahavairocana-sutra. From lectures by his teacher, I-hsing compiled a commentary on the Mahavairocana-sutra called Ta-jih-Ching Su. This commentary, left in an unrevised manuscript, was later revised by Chih-yen, another pupil of Subhakarasinha and Wan-ku, a pupil of Vajrabodhi, and was called Ta-jih Ching I-shih. (The Shingon or the Chen-yen follows the unrevised version, while the Taimitsu or the Japanese Tendai follows the latter.) I-hsing studied under the two Indian teachers, Subhakarasinha and Vajrabodhi, and was initiated into the cults of both the Vajra-dhatu and Garbha-kosa, but he is said to have held the latter as the more important.[3]

> According to tradition, Subhakarasinha and his pupil, I-hsing, transmitted the Matrix (Taizokai or garbhakosa-dhatu) doctrine, while Vajrabodhi and his pupil, Amoghavajra, taught the Diamond (Kongokai or vajradhatu) doctrine. Thus we must presume that there were two traditions of transmission, both being only partial or one-sided.
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> However, the recent discovery of the Tattva-sangraha in Tibet by Professor Tucci and the Vajra-sekhara (Rita-sangraha) in Japan by Professor Ono make the old tradition entirely untenable, because the Vajra-sekhara represented in the Five Assemblies [Gobu-shinkwan] was kept in secret in the Mii Monastery in Omi and Shorenin in Kyoto. The 'Five Assemblies' are

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[1]Edkins, op. cit., pp. 124-218. [2]Tajima, op. cit., p. 24.

[3]R. Kambayashi, "Daibirushana-jobutsushimpen-kaji-kaidai," Kokuyaku-daizokyo, Mikkyo-bu, ed. Shinyu Iwano, Vol. I (1931).

Buddha, Padma, Ratna, Vajra, and Karma. These being originally the division of the Diamond Realm, it is clear that we had from the beginning the text of the 'Diamond' doctrine brought by Subhakarasinha. They were actually the transmission by Subhakarasinha. From this it will be seen that at the time of Subhakarasinha both the 'Diamond' and 'Matrix' doctrines were existing in China.[1]

Another important figure in the history of the Chen-yen is Hui-kuo(746-805), a disciple of Amoghavajra. After the death of Amoghavajra in 774, Hui-kuo was the chief advisor to three successive emperors and was called the "teacher of the state." He was appointed abbot of the Ch'ing-lung temple at Ch'ang-an where he taught a number of pupils including Kukai or Kobo-daishi from Japan.[2] Hui-kuo died during Kukai's stay in China.

The Chen-yen school, as well as the Shingon school in Japan, recognizes two sets of valid transmissions. One is the Fuho no Hasso or "eight patriarchs of the ritual tradition," who are: (1) Mahavairocana, (2) Vajrasattva, (3) Nagarjuna, (4) Nagabodhi, (5) Vajrabodhi, (6) Amoghavajra, (7) Hui-kuo, (8) Kukai. The second is the Denju no Hasso or "eight patriarchs of propagating the doctrine," who are: (1) Nagarjuna, (2) Nagabodhi, (3) Vajrabodhi, (4) Subhakarasinha, (5) Amoghavajra, (6) I-hsing, (7) Hui-kuo, (8) Kukai.[3]

Although the Chen-yen existed in China after the death of Hui-kuo, it never again attained the prominence which it held under the leadership of Amoghavajra and Hui-kuo. It gradually became

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[1]Takakusu, op. cit., p. 152.

[2]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 337.

[3]Tajima, op. cit., pp. 20-25.

integrated into other schools of Buddhism through funeral and other rituals. The Chen-yen helped enlarge the Buddhist pantheon in China, but as it never became a denomination in China, the pantheon soon became the common monopoly of all the Mahayana schools. (The Buddhist pantheon was even included in the Taoist pantheon later on.)[1] The Chen-yen also stimulated secret societies, and it enjoyed prestige among the court circles. These characteristics of the Chen-yen in China in the early ninth century impressed Kukai.

To what extent the Chen-yen in China influenced Tibetan esoteric Buddhism, commonly known as Lamaism, needs further study. At any rate, Lamaism later invaded northern China and remains to this day as the dominant esoteric school. It is a matter of interest that in recent years the Chen-yen has again caught the imagination of some Buddhist scholars.[2]

In all fairness to the Chen-yen school in China, it may be said that its teaching and practice had been transplanted to Japan by the early ninth century. To be sure, the Shingon school in Japan quickly developed in an unique way; nevertheless, the doctrinal basis of the Shingon followed faithfully the Chen-yen in China.

Sutras and Doctrines of the Shingon School

The Shingon school, following the Chen-yen school in China, utilized many sutras. Among them, the Mahavairocana-sutra, the

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 150.

[2]Reichelt, Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism, pp. 346-347.

Vajrasekhara-sutra, and the Susiddhikara-sutra are the three most important scriptures of this school.

Mahavairocana-sutra, commonly known as Dainichi-kyo, is listed in Nanjio's catalogue (No. 530) under the Chinese title, Ta-phi-lu-ko-na-khan-fo-shan-pien-kia-kh-kin, or "Sutra on Mahavairocana's becoming Buddha and the supernatural formula called Yugandhara."[1] This sutra was translated by Subhakarasinha and I-hsing in 724, and it has seven fasciculi and thirty-six chapters. According to an ancient tradition, there were three sources of the sutra: (1) Honi-jogo-no-hon, or "eternal model which exists according to Dharma," (2) Bunryu-no-kohon, or "model developed from diffusion," and (3) bunryu-no-ryakuhon, or "shortened model developed from diffusion." The third, containing more than three thousand gatha, constitutes the Dainishi-kyo we possess.[2] Of its seven chapters, the first six were collected by Wu-hing, who died in northern China on his way from India. The collection was kept at Hua-yen monastery in Ch'ang-an, and Subhakarasinha took the trouble of translating it.[3] The seventh chapter, which is more or less independent of the first six chapters, is said to have been brought to China by Vajrabodhi. It has been pointed out that I-hsing, a pupil of Subhakarasinha, compiled a commentary on the sutra, based on his teacher's lecture, called Ta-jih-Ching Su (Dainichikyoso in Japanese), which has been handed down in the Shingon school. As it was left in an unrevised manuscript, this

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[1]Nanjio, A Catalogue of The Chinese Translation of The Buddhist Tripitaka, p. 122.

[2]Tajima, op. cit., pp. 28-30. [3]Takakusu, op. cit., p. 144.

commentary was further revised by Chih-yen and Wan-ku, and was called Ta-jih Ching I-shih (Dainichi-kyo-gishaku in Japanese), which the Tendai school in Japan follows.[1]

Vajra-sekhara-yoga-sutra, commonly known as Kongocho-kyo, is listed in Nanjio's catalogue (No. 534) under the Chinese title, Kin-kan-tin-yu-kie-kun-liao-khu-nien-sun-kin, or "Sutra for reciting, being an abridged translation of the Vajra-sekhara-yoga (-tantra)."[2] This was translated by Vajrabodhi in 723, and it has four fasciculi. The sutra gives minute accounts of the necessary qualifications to receive the Shingon, the place where the transmission may take place, and mantras for health, for worldly benefit, and for the defeat of enemy. For instance, when a novice wishes to stand up, he is to say: "Vajra ve ga." When he sits down, he is to say "Tistha vajra." When he wishes to purify himself, he is to say: "Om kuru drsti he hum phata." When he venerates all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the Eastern direction, he is to say: "Om sarva-tathagata puja upasthanaya atmanam niryatagami sarva-tathagata vajra-sattva adhistha sva mam hum"; of the Southern direction: "Om sarva-tathagata pujabhisekaya atmanam niryatayami sarva-tathagata vajra-ratna abhisinca mamtrah"; of the Western direction: "Om sarva-tathagata pujapravartanaya atmanam niryatayami sarva-tathagata vajra-dharma pravartaya mam (aham) hrih"; of the Northern direction: "Om sarva-tathagata pujakarmani atmanam niryatayami sarva-tathagata vajra-karma kuru mam ah." All

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[1] Ibid., pp. 145-146.

[2] Nanjio, A Catalogue of The Chinese Translation of The Buddhist Tripitaka, p. 123.

these and many other mantras are to be taught orally only to the initiated or to those who had received abhiseka. This sutra teaches the thirty-seven kinds of wisdom which are to be realized in the Diamond-samadhi (Kongo-sammaji in Japanese). Historically, however, this sutra was used more as a source book for the rituals of the Shingon school. Two important chapters of Kongocho-kyo are Kwanjo, or abhiseka,[1] and Goma, or homa ritual.[2]

Susiddhikara-sutra is listed in Nanjio's catalogue (No. 533) under the Chinese title, Su-shih-ti-kie-lo-kin."[3] It was translated by Subhakarasinha in 724, and it has three fasciculi and thirty-eight chapters. The whole text of the sutra was translated into Japanese by Yusei Abe and included in Kokuyaku-daizokyo.[4] This sutra is concerned with the three kinds of siddhi (magical power) which move the cosmos.

Although both the Shingon and the Tendai venerate the Dainichikyo and Kongochokyo (Vajrasekhara), they interpret them differently. The Shingon claims that Dainichikyo, which teaches reason (Taizokai), and Kongocho-kyo, which teaches wisdom (Kongokai), are essentially harmonious in doctrine. Kukai, following his teacher Hui-kuo, accepted the view that Dainichikyo was actually written by Nagarjuna, based on the teaching of Dharmakaya-Tathagata

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[1]Ryujo Kambayashi, "Kongocho-yuga-churyaku-shutsunenju-kyo," Kokuyaku-Daizokyo, Mikkyo-bu, ed. Shinyu Iwano. Vol. V (1931).

[2]Ibid.

[3]Nanjio, A Catalogue of The Chinese Translation of The Buddhist Tripitaka, p. 123.

[4]Yusei Abe, "Soshitsujikara-kyo," Kokuyaku-daizokyo, Mikkyo-bu, ed. Shinyu Iwano, Vol. V (1931).

himself. According to Kukai, wisdom and reason, Taizokai and Kongokai, are essentially two sides of the same truth. On the other hand, the Tendai, which transmitted the Taimitsu, claims that Taizokai and Kongohai are independent of each other; according to the Tendai, only the Susiddikara-sutra harmonizes reason and wisdom. The Tendai teaches that Kongochokyo was the secret meaning of the Avatansaka-sutra, while Dainichikyo was the secret meaning of the Lotus. Saicho (Dengyo-daishi) attempted to emphasize the philosophy of the Lotus and the esoteric practice of Dainichikyo simultaneously. However, Saicho's successors, Jikaku and Chisho, were more interested in the esoteric practice of Dainichikyo, to the extent that at one time the Tendai monastic school at Mount Hiei placed more emphasis on esotericism than the Shingon monastery at Mount Koya. Nevertheless, the historic interpretation of Tendai was that Mahavairocana was the Nirmanakaya (Wo-jin in Japanese) and not the Dharmakaya (Hosshin in Japanese) as taught by the Shingon school.[1]

It has been mentioned earlier that Kukai came into possession of Dainichikyo at Kume temple in the district of Yamato before his visit to China and that there was a legend that Subhakarasinha had visited this temple himself and left the sutra. This legend is not reliable historically, but it is widely accepted that a Hosso priest Gembo, who returned from China in 735, must have brought Dainichikyo from China. Whether, while at Kume temple, Kukai found the Dainichikyo itself or Dainichikyoso, the com-

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[1]Kambayashi, "Daibirushana-jobutsu-shimpen-kaji-kaidai," Kokuyaku-daizokyo, Mikkoyo-bu, ed. Shinyu Iwano, Vol. I (1931).

mentary by I-hsing, is not specifically mentioned. It was probably the latter, because Kukai upon his return from China gave the first lecture on Dainichikyoso in 807. Kukai regarded Dainichikyoso just as important and valid as Dainichikyo itself. The twenty chapters of Dainichikyoso are divided into two parts: Kuchi-no-so or "beginning part of the commentary," which could be heard by the uninitiated, and Oku-no-so, or "higher part of the commentary," which could be heard only by those who had received abhiseka. The Shingon school, following the example of Kukai, was preoccupied with Dainichikyoso, rather than with Dainichikyo itself. In the Tendai school, however, Dainichikyo-gishaku by Chih-yen and Wan-ku has been regarded superior to Dainichikyoso.

To what extent the present Dainichikyo transmits the original Dainichikyo cannot be documented. Scholars have labored over this question, and it is widely accepted that the Tibetan translation (which was translated by Silendra-bodhi, an Indian priest, and dPal-brtsegs, a Tibetan translator, under the Tibetan king Ralpacan [806-842]), and the present Dainichikyo must have been derived from the same Sanskrit original and that this Sanskrit original was probably the Bunryu-no-ryakuhon.[1]

Tajima, in his Etude sur le Mahavairocana-sutra, states that the essential idea of Dainichikyo is "know the truth of your own heart." According to this sutra, one's heart is the "pure heart of Bodhi." (The Sanskrit term Citta, which has often been translated as "spirit," is translated as "heart" by Tajima.) Dainichikyo defines the true nature of the heart and, at the same time,

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[1]Ibid.

the true nature of all the _dharmas_, because to understand the _dharma_ is to understand the heart (_Shin_ in Japanese).[1]

Anesaki describes the world view of the _Mahavairocana-sutra_ as "cosmotheism."[2] This view defines the total cosmos as divinity; particular features of the cosmos are assembled in the form of separate deities for certain purposes. The ideal of spiritual communion extends not only to celestial and animal existences, but even further to the demoniac and non-sentient beings. Buddha, in this _sutra_, is the perfect person who attained the life of all-embracing wisdom and love, thus identifying himself with the cosmos and all the lives in it. The final substratum of Buddhahood is the cosmos, including its spiritual and material aspects, and Buddha is the Lord who rules it, not from above, but from within. His spirit is the cosmic soul which, like a "seed," evolves out of itself all the phenomena of the universe. The cosmic life, thus regarded as the enactment of the infinite communion ruled by Buddha (the Cosmic Soul) may be experienced by the soul which lives the life not of an individual but of the whole communion; and this soul of ours, when it transcends the narrowness of individuality, can include all existences within its domain and discover in itself the germs of phenomena.

The central figure in _Dainichikyo_ is, of course, Mahavairocana, the Great Enlightener or Great Illuminator, a former title of Buddha which is specified in this _sutra_ as a distinct personality. The idealization of Buddha's personality led to the belief

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[1]Tajima, _op. cit._, pp. 13-16.

[2]Masaharu Anesaki, _Buddhist Art_ (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1915), pp. 31-32.

that he is the omnipotent primordial god and the universal essence of cosmotheism. About the first century in the Christian era, Buddha was made to be existent from all eternity (Anada); even in the Lotus, although the theistic term Adi-Buddha or Primordial Buddha does not occur in this work, Sakyamuni is identified with Adi-Buddha. And with respect to the modes of manifestations of the universal essence:

> . . . as there is no limit to the immensity of reason and measurement to the universe, so all the Buddhas are possessed of infinite wisdom and infinite mercy. There is no place throughout the universe where the essential body of Vairocana is not present. Far and wide through the fields of space he is present, and perpetually manifested.[1]

In the Mahavairocana-sutra, the primary meaning of Mahavairocana is the infinity of the wisdom of the Tathagata, the infinity of his compassion, and the immutability and the permanence of his nature. The fundamental teaching of Dainichikyo is that we must understand our identity with Mahavairocana. From this assumption, it follows that the triple meaning of Mahavairocana is equivalent to the three aspects of guna, or merit of the "pure heart of Bodhi" which is in us: (1) the "pure heart of Bodhi" overthrows the passions of ignorance, (2) it enables us to mature into fruit of Bodhi, (3) it enables us to remain unchangeable in this world. This triple meaning of the name of Mahavairocana, interpreted in this sutra, is the basic doctrine of the Shingon school. In this sense, the preoccupation of the Shingon school is with Buddhology. Sakyamuni was both historic person and an enlightened Buddha. He was a human being, having attained en-

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[1]Wadell, op. cit., pp. 126-127.

lightenment as a result of his convictions of the truth of the Law. This Law which he conceived is that absolute reality (tathata) exists unchangeably. As Dainichikyo states: "The dharma rest always (Nyoze), according to their nature of dharma (Honi), whether the Tathagata be manifest or not." The Dharmakaya is the body of the Law of eternal reality which was conceived by Sakyamuni at his enlightenment. There are three characteristics of the Law: (1) there is an exclusive domain of the Buddhas, which cannot be known to us; (2) Mahavairocana, who himself is eternal, explains this law to us; (3) the Law, after the explanation of Dainichikyo and Kongochokyo, is recorded in Honi-jogo-no-hon, or the "eternal model which exists according to the Dharma" (one of the three sources of the present Dainichikyo). The Buddhology of this sutra may be summarized in the statement that Mahavairocana is the Buddha historically idealized in Dharmakaya, and he is neither born nor dies.[1]

The soteriology of Dainichikyo follows the Yogacara school, about which we quote from Stcherbatsky:

> At the end of their career both brothers [Vasubandhu and Asanga] definitely settled in the conviction, that the universe was a logical construction, that all its separate elements were relative, not real in themselves, but that they possessed another reality, the parinispanna, a reality in the Absolute, they were real when regarded sub specie aeternitatis. The theory of Salvation, of this transition from samsara into nirvana, out of the phenomenal world into the Absolute . . . underwent a complete change as a consequence of the change in the ontological view. In Hinayana where . . . both samsara and nirvana were considered as realities, the mystic power of yoga was called upon to achieve the transition out of the one into the other. Actual experience in transic meditation suggested to the Buddhist philosophers that yoga was capable of arresting some functions of the senses and of the intellect. . . .

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[1] Tajima, op. cit., pp. 45-48.

The great change produced by the Mahayana consisted in the view that the Absolute was immanent to the World. There was consequently no need of converting the elements of the phenomenal world into eternal elements, the samskrta-dharmas into asamskrta-dharmas, the samsara into nirvana. The change consisted in the change of aspect. The mystic power of yoga was now invoked not in order to produce a real change in the constitution of the Universe, but in order to replace the wrong views of unsophisticated humanity by an intuition of what was the absolutely real. To the yogi the world appeared in a quite different aspect, he viewed every separate object as unreal separately, but real sub specie aeternitatis. For him the elements (dharmas) of the Universe needed no conversion into eternal ones, they were themselves eternally "quiescent."

The Hinayanistic conception of separate elements (dharma) which were active in phenomenal life and quiescent (santa) or extinct (niruddha) in Nirvana was, according to the Yogacara, contrary to reason. If they were real they could not disappear totally. They were, accordingly, declared to have been always quiescent, quiescent or extinct from the outset (adi-santa). To regard them active, in the transcendental sense, is an illusion. In that sense . . . nirvana is real and samsara unreal.

In the system of Dignaga [the new school in the Yogacara] the old Abhidharma is forsaken altogether and replaced by logic and epistemology. Dignaga started with the reform of the Brahmanical logic (nyaya) and adapted it to Buddhist ideas. His analysis of cognition, a point-instant (ksana) in which existence and cognition, object and subject, coalesce. The conception of this idealistic school regarding Nirvana may be gathered from the closing words of Dharmakirti in his "Examination of Solipsism." The question is asked how is the omniscience of Buddha to be understood, of the Buddhas which are the personification of pure consciousness undifferentiated into subject and object, and it is answered that "the penetration of the Buddhas into every existing object is something inconceivable, it is in every respect beyond what we may express in speech or cognise in concepts."[1]

In Dainichikyo, Vajrapani poses the following question in the mouth of the Buddha: Who searches for the omniscient knowledge? The answer of Dainichikyo follows the Dignaga line of thought. It says there is no duality; the heart of Bodhi innate in all being and the omniscience of Buddha mingle basically. That which we call the heart of Bodhi is omniscient knowledge. How

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[1]Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana, pp. 34-35.

can one say that there is a subject which searches and an object which is sought? Where there is an Awakened, there is the Awakener. Furthermore, there is no Dharma without the heart. The Bodhi and omniscient knowledge ought to be sought by each person in his own heart, because our original nature is pure. The purpose of Buddha in revealing Dainichikyo is to reveal the truth of the heart.[1]

The nature of Bodhi, is expressed by the syllable "A," which is the mantra of Mahavairocana. The faithful of the Shingon, in practicing the samadhi or mystic contemplation, perceives that the divinity and he are one and that the divinity enters him and he enters the divinity (nyuga-ganyu). The divinity presents himself under three natures and under siddhi (magical power) of two kinds. The faithful, in order to acquire magical power, must devote himself to Nirlaksana-samadhi (mystic contemplation without particular character), which is a contemplation of Sunya expressed in the syllable "A" signifying "without original production." Dainichikyo describes esoteric recitation (Jiju in Japanese, literally meaning "retain and recite") of two kinds: (1) the this-worldly method (laukika) of pronouncing the mantra of the divinity, regulating the rhythm of inhalation and experation; (2) the other-worldly method (lokottara), a mental recitation of the mantra concentrating on the divinity in order to identify oneself with him. It is indispensable to cultivate these two methods simultaneously to assure the success of the recitation and attainment of the magical power. At the end of the sutra, Bhagavat charges his listeners:

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[1]Tajima, op. cit., pp. 99-102.

"Do not be negligent concerning this doctrine, and do not transmit it to others whose nature you do not know." The sutra enumerates in detail the qualification for its transmission, such as the astrological signs, high ambitions, and keen intelligence.[1]

The Ninnokyo or "Sutra of the benevolent king" was closely identified with the Shingon school. It was the text used for the Ninno-e, or "votive service of the benevolent king," celebrated at the Heian court. As mentioned earlier, the Chinese Tripitaka contains two translations of this sutra, by Kumarajiva and Amoghavajra. Kumarajiva's translation is known in Japan as Ninno-gokoku-hannya-haramitsu-kyo, or "Prajnaparamita-sutra explaining how benevolent kings may protect their countries," and was used by the Tendai school. Kumarajiva translated the sutra between 402 and 412. Amoghavajra translated it in 771 and his translation was known as Ninno-gokoku-hannya-haramita-kyo. Amoghavajra's version added thirty-six dharanis toward the end of the seventh chapter. He made it one of the important sutras of the Chen-yen school, as he did also with the Mahamayuri sutra. Amoghavajra's translation was used in the Ninnokyobo, or the "rite of the sutra of the Benevolent King," practised by the Shingon school in the Toji temple at Kyoto. The votive service called Ninno-e belonged to the public service, and for this reason Kumarajiva's translation may have been used. (Before Amoghavajra's translation was brought to Japan, Ninnokyo had been used in Japan. As mentioned earlier, in 676, during Emperor Temmu's reign, Ninnokyo was ordered to be expounded in every province. In 729, this sutra was expounded in Emperor Shomu's

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[1] Ibid., pp. 119-140.

palace; in 760, Emperor Junnin arranged a Ninno-e in the palace and in Todaiji; in 794 Emperor Kwammu forbade the killing of living things for three days in all provinces.)[1]

De Visser, in discussing the first chapter of Ninnokyo, says:

> There are two important points in which Amoghavajra's translation . . . differs from the older text of Kumarajiva: the names of the five Bodhisattvas and the dharanis. The latter . . . are entirely omitted by Kumarajiva. . . . Yet his translation evidently follows the original much more precisely than that of Amoghavajra, who often omits numbers and small details. Thus in the description of the ceremony to be performed Kumarajiva translates as follows.
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> "Great kings, you must (order to) make nine-coloured flags . . . and tables . . . and place the sutras . . . thereon. If a king celebrates the ceremony, he must always distribute (the offerings) one hundred steps before these tables. . . . This sutra always emits a thousand brilliant rays and prevents the seven calamities and crimes from arising within a radius of a thousand miles. If a king resides (somewhere), he must have curtains made of the seven precious materials, and inside these curtains a high seat . . . on which the sutra must be placed. Day after day he must make offerings, spread flowers, and burn incense, as if he served his father and mother or king Sakra, the ruler of the devas."[2]

There were several aims of the use of Ninnokyo. The principal aim was to give peace and prosperity to the nation. The next aim was to cause rain. The third was to stop pestilence, small-pox, leprosy, and other epidemic. The fourth was to avert evil omens--that is, the evil consequence (rebellion, drought, pestilence) of the appearance of comets, sun or moon eclipse and other strange events. As such Ninnokyo became a popular sutra in the court circles in Japan.[3]

Ninnokyo popularized and enlarged the pantheon in Japan. We shall discuss some of the important figures of this sutra.

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[1]De Visser, op. cit., I, 116-124.

[2]Ibid., pp. 141-142. [3]Ibid., pp. 182-187.

There are the Five Great-Power Bodhisattvas (Godairiki Bosatsu in Japanese): (1) Vajra-nada or Kongoku, holding a Sembo-sorin or "thousand treasures-wheel"; (2) Nagaraja-nada or Ryuoku, carrying a Konrinto or "golden wheel lamp"; (3) Abhya-dasabala-nada or Muijurikiku, holding a Kongo-sho or "vajra-club"; (4) Meghadundubhi-nada or Raidenku, carrying a Sembo-ramo or "thousand treasures-net"; and (5) Amita-bala-nada or Muryorikiku, carrying a Gojukenrin or "fifty swords-wheel." These "Five Great Officers" are the Kings of the 5,000 Great Spirits (Daijin in Japanese), and they shall produce great blessings to the country. These five bodhisattvas are the real bodhisattva forms of the Godai-myo-O or "Five Great Vidya-rajas." The Godai-myo-O are: (1) Fudo Myo-O or Acala Vidyaraja, (2) Gozanze Myo-O or Trilokya-vijaya Vidyaraja, (3) Gundari Myo-O or Kundali Vidyaraja, (4) Dai-itoku Myo-O or Yamantaka Vidyaraja, and (5) Kongo Yasha Myo-O or Vajrayaksha Vidyaraja. Further, these five Myo-O correspond to the original nature of the five following Buddhas: (1) Mahavairocana, (2) Akshobya, (3) Ratnasambhava, (4) Amitabha, and (5) Amoghasiddi. It is to be noted that originally the word vidyaraja meant "personification of magical formulas," but Amoghavajra converted them into the "vajra-carrying figures." These figures of the Ninnokyo pantheon became well revered in Japan.[1]

According to the Shingon system, the Cosmic Buddha is not a mere spirit, but his body is the whole of material existence. Viewed in this way, human beings, furnished with body and mind, are a concrete manifestation of the whole cosmic structure, and it is

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[1]Ibid., pp. 142-156.

the purpose of Buddha in his numerous manifestations to enlighten us concerning our original kinship with him. These educative activities of Buddha are taught by the Shingon in terms of Buddha's virtues and powers. Anesaki writes:

> This is done by visualizing in pictures, statues, and rites the symbolic or anthropomorphic manifestations of Buddha and of the various deities which are his emanations. The Great Illuminator . . . is sometimes represented as a golden Buddha sitting on a red or variegated lotus flower, his hands folded in the posture of profound contemplation; again, he appears as a Buddha perfectly white in body sitting on a white lotus and expressing in his joined hands his intention of revealing truth. . . . He is shown also in a formidable aspect sitting or standing, his whole person expressive of resentment and indignation. In this guise he is called the Immobile (Sanskrit, Achala; Japanese Fudo), and his fierce eyes glare at every evil thought or base passion. . . . His powers may also be visualized by associating with his figure a number of deities, each of whom embodies a certain attribute or intention of the Buddha. When . . . he is surrounded by four other Buddhas, the arrangement is meant to signify that he is the kernel and fountain-head of indefatigable determination, inexhaustible blessings, spiritual enlightenment and endless adaptability, respectively represented by the persons of the surrounding four. . . . And again each of these four may be represented in various forms and accompanied by subordinate figures which convey their respective functions.
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> The characteristics of these deities are represented chiefly by facial expression and bodily postures. But no less important roles are assigned to details of attire, such as the forms of crowns, the colors of lotus pedestals . . . all of which are intended to symbolize virtues and powers and to embody certain aspects of the cosmic activities.
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> To know all these signs and symbolic meanings is a hard task, and we, the uninitiated, must remain satisfied with being told that the possible deities and symbols are as many as the atoms of the universe. What we can observe for ourselves, however, is the bearing of this mystic symbolization upon painting and sculpture. . . . Moreover, these representations were not mere diagrams, but portrayals of various emotions, intentions, powers and virtues by means of corresponding personal appearance of the deities represented. . . . Thus, although the art of Singon was largely controlled by its symbolic conventions, and although some of its figures are ultra-human or even repellent, its metriculous care in the matter of symbolic details was combined with an eager effort for the realistic execution of human expressions in face, body and limbs . . . the results of which are seen chiefly in the art of the

Heian period, from the ninth to the twelfth century.[1]

The Shingon school projects the whole scheme of the universe on a plane surface and arranges the figures side by side according to classes within squares and circles, as if the statues had been laid on a platform and looked at from above. The complete group is called a mandala (mandara in Japanese) or assemblage, and is used to represent graphically the cosmotheistic world-view in its entirety. The word mandala is not a unique word of the Shingon school. As mentioned earlier, the hymns of the Rigveda were divided into parts called mandalas. In the Shingon, the term is said to be composed of manda or essence and la or possession, signifying the thing possessing essence. This means Bodhi or the state of enlightenment. The mandala of the Shingon shows the self-enlightenment of the Buddha. (There are other meanings of the term mandala, such as circle or altar.) There is the formless mandala and form mandala; the former can be understood only by the pure enlightened mind and the latter is its copy for the meditation of the Shingon followers.

> There are two mandaras which are supposed to represent the two aspects of cosmic life. They are called respectively the Diamond element (in Sanskrit Vajradhatu and in Japanese Kongokai) and the Womb element (in Sanskrit garbha-dhatu and in Japanese Taizokai). Diamond is explained as having the two qualities of hardness and utility. As being hard, it represents eternal and indestructible truth, which nothing can alter. Its usefulness is seen in the way which wisdom spreads light and destroys all the obstacles raised by the passions. It represents the eternal and fundamental ideas which have their seat in the soul of Vairocana and which are always active in every part of the Universe. The other Mandara is called the Womb because Shingon regards all the many deities and powers acting in the cosmos in it at children are contained in their mothers' wombs and as ready to issue and take their

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[1]Anesaki, Buddhist Art, pp. 34-36.

part in eternally creating a universe, not of lifeless matter but perpetually living and growing. It is to be noted that with this statement of the two categories--Kongokai and Taizokai--of the Universe, the written or open teaching of the Shingon ends. Further explanation, which is obviously necessary, is part of the secret teaching which is only communicated by word of mouth to the initiated.[1]

Takakusu interprets Kongokai and Taizokai to signify "static" and "dynamic" natures of the Buddha. He says:

> The static nature of the Buddha is potentially perfected like the great luminary (Diamond Element), and is the Mahavairocana . . . of the Diamond Element. To us it is not yet clear that the all-illumining dynamic force, like warmth or mercy, is to enfold all beings which are in the realm of natural principle (Matrix Repository). Therefore, the spiritual body of principle (Rihojin in Japanese) is depicted as if the world of nature, i.e., universe itself, should become illumined and assume a splendor of perfect wisdom. This Buddha is possessed of the perfect harmony of the sixfold greatness; i.e., earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness and is the Buddha Mahavairocana of the Matrix Repository. These curious names of the worlds of 'Diamond Element' and 'Matrix Repository' indicate the indestructible character of personal wisdom, otherwise called the realm of effect and the natural source of beings (sometimes called the realm of cause).
>
> These two aspects of the Buddha are strictly distinguished. I used the word 'static' or 'dynamic' with regard to the person of the Buddha on the basis of the manifestation of his enfolding power. Seen from the attainment of his perfect wisdom, the Buddha of the realm of nature is static and therefore has the sign (mudra) of 'meditation,' while the Buddha of the realm of wisdom is dynamic owing to the vivid realization of his ideals and has the sign of 'wisdom-fist.' Suppose an individual develops himself and attains enlightenment and advances so far as to conform to the universal principle; he will then be the Buddha Mahavairocana of the individual realm (Diamond Element). In sculpture he is represented with the left hand grasping the index finger of the right hand, the sign of 'wisdom-fist.'
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> On the other hand, when the universe itself becomes illumined and assumes a splendor of wisdom, he then will be the Buddha Mahavairocana of the natural realm (Matrix Repository). In sculpture he is represented as having the sign of meditation on the universe, with the right hand on the left, the thumbs touching each other.
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> Thus there are two Buddhas with one and the same name, different in manifestation but identical in quality. "They are two and yet not two." When the six great elements (earth, water, fire, air, space, and consciousness) are coordinated

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 345.

crosswise (according to space) we get the universe, i.e., the universal body of the Buddha of the Matrix Realm. When the six elements are arranged lengthwise or vertically (according to time), we get the individual of five aggregates, i.e., the personal body of the Buddha of the Diamond Realm. Mystically speaking, the two persons of ultimate perfection would be of one and the same width and height.[1]

The usual interpretation of the mandala is that the Kongokai represents wisdom, while the Taizokai represents reason. The Kongo mandala shows Mahavairocana in the spiritual realm, while the Taizo mandala shows him in his earthly realm. The important object of the "Two Parts" (Ryobu in Japanese), Kongokai and Taizokai, is to know truly the origin or bottom of one's own thought, and understand the measure or constituents of one's own body. The fundamental teaching of the Shingon is that everything in the universe has a substance, a form, and an activity; the various forms of Mahavairocana are graphically shown and described in the mandala. In the Kongo mandala, the holy ones sit on a lotus flower in the moon, while in the Taizo mandala, they sit on the moon whose support is a lotus flower. The moon symbolizes "wisdom" or the spiritual aspect, and the lotus symbolizes "reason" or the material aspect. The lotus in the moon shows that all material things come from mind or wisdom, with no difference between mind and matter in their nature. The moon on the lotus shows that wisdom exists in material things, and material things are not different from mind in their nature. All come from the six great elements and show the oneness of mind. The Taizokai embodies the idea of Honnubyodo (every being is equal in its fundamental aspect) and shows the inborn Buddhahood in all creatures. The Taizokai

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[1]Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

mandala includes the first five of the six elements, so it is often called Shikiho-no-mandara (mandala of materials). It is also called the Lotus (Renge in Japanese) mandala, for the lotus is the symbol for reason. Of the two states, cause and effect, the Taizokai mandala represents the former. On the other hand, the Kongokai mandala embodies the theory of Chishabetsu (every being has its individual differences in spite of fundamental equality). It also represents consciousness, which is the sixth element, and it represents the "effect" and the final phase of Buddahood.

For attributes, the Kongokai has wisdom, difference, mind, spiritual world, length, consciousness, Buddhas, induction, while the Taizokai has reason, equality, matter, the physical world, width, mercy, ignorant beings, and deduction. Yet the Kongokai and Taizokai are Ni ni fu ni or "two but not two."

Beatrice Lane Suzuki interprets the Taizokai mandala in The Eastern Buddhist.[1] According to her, the full title of this mandala "Daihitaizo mandara" means the "great mercy bearing mandala." It sprang from the fundamental letter or principle of "A," or Aji. "A" is synonymous with the aspiration for Buddhahood. The Taizo mandala represents the phenomenal world and the universal consciousness of the Buddha. According to a Shingon account, this mandala was painted by Hui-kuo in order to explain the teaching which could not be expressed by words. The master of the mandala is the Dharmakaya Buddha (Mahavairocana) in meditation.

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[1]Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "The School of Shingon Buddhism," The Eastern Buddhist, VII (1936), 1-38.

Traditional Buddhology teaches three bodies--Dharmakaya (Hosshin), Sambhogakaya (Hoshin), Nirmanakaya (Wojin). Shingon Buddhology teaches four bodies: (1) Jishojin, the body of self-nature, the Dharmakaya of the Taizokai and Kongokai; (2) Juyojin, the Sambhogakaya which consists of two forms, the Juyojin manifested for his own enjoyment and the Buddha's manifestation of himself for the benefit of bodhisattvas, (3) Hengejin, the Nirmanakaya manifested for the Bodhisattvas of lower ranks--sravakas, pratyeka-buddhas and ordinary people; (4) Toryujin manifestation of the Tathagata in the form of bodhisattvas and others. The fourth is unique in the Shingon; it means that the Buddha manifests himself in the same kind of body as the sentient beings he wishes to save. In the mandala, the Toryujin is represented by devils and dragons. The Taizo mandala is based on the Mahavairocana sutra or Dainichikyo.

In the Taizo mandala there are 414 great beings representing Buddhas, bodhisattvas, kings, generals, and ordinary beings including animals. They are all manifestations of the nine divine beings in the central enclosure. The mandala represents all the ten Buddhist worlds from hell to the world of Buddha. The divinities of the Taizokai mandala are classified in four groups: (1) Buddhas such as Sakyamuni and Amida, (2) Bodhisattvas such as Avalokitesvara, (3) Vidyarajas such as Fudo (4) Devas such as Ganapati and Sarasvati. Besides these are ordinary beings included in the outer circle. The inner circle is composed of three families: (1) The Buddha, (2) The Lotus, (3) The Vajra or Diamond. The Lotus family represents the manifestation of great compassion,

and the Diamond family the manifestation of wisdom. All these make up the body of great meditation and show the manifestation of Mahavairocana as absolute wisdom, compassion, and will. The underlying thought is that the body, speech, and thought of Mahavairocana make up the life of the universe. Shingon ritual proceeds from the mandala by acts of worship, imitating the mandala by posture and mudra (gesture). Religious acts are manifestations of the Sammitsu or three secrets. The evocation of power through mystic symbols by worship makes Shingon ritual. In the mandala, each Buddha or bodhisattva has a symbol (samaya), a character (shuji), a gesture (mudra), a word (mantra), and is noted for certain efficacy (kudoku).

There are twelve enclosures, sometimes called assemblies.[1] The different enclosures represent certain powers. The Buddhas of the Central Lotus enclosure represent the four wisdoms, and the four bodhisattvas their acting faculties. The other enclosures represent the virtues of Mahavairocana: Henchi-in shows the overcoming the evils; Jimyo-in, the virtues of saving; the Kwannon-in and Jimyo-in, compassion; and Kongoshu-in and Jokaisho-in, wisdom; the Shaka-in, the Nirmanakaya; the Monju-in, wisdom; the Kokuzo-in, the virtue of wisdom; the Soshitsuji-in, the virtues; and the Gekongobu-in, latent Buddhahood.

The central assembly, the Chutai-hachiyo-in (Central Lotus assembly),[2] is the heart of the Taizo mandala, and it represents

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[1]Nanjio, A Short History of The Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, p. 96.

[2]Ibid., p. 98

Hridaya or heart of beings, which is divided into nine consciousnesses--those of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind, manas, alaya, and amala. This assembly stands for the idea that all are equal, that I am really Mahavairocana, and my heart is that of Mahavairocana, so that the entire world is a modification of my own mind. The five Buddhas of the central assembly represent the Five Wisdoms, and the bodhisattvas in the four corners represent the deeds which bring about the action of the Five Wisdoms. If one meditates on the lotus flower of one's heart, eight petals of the flower burst open and five Buddhas and four bodhisattvas appear on him. The central Eight-petaled Lotus assembly represents the nine consciousnesses in latent state: the Buddha Tenkuraion the first five, Amitabha the sixth (mind consciousness), Kaifukei Buddha the seventh (manas consciousness), Hodo Buddha the eighth (Alaya consciousness), and Mahavairocana the ninth (Amala consciousness). The central eight leaves means the forms of the five wisdoms unfolded from the eight Vijnana which are the bases of original ignorance. The four wisdoms are represented by Buddhas and Mahavairocana himself sumbolizes the fifth which is the most fundamental one.

Above the central assembly is the Henchi-in (all-knowing enclosure).[1] It represents universal wisdom. In the center is the Sarva-Tathagata-Jnana mudra (Issai Nyorai Chi In). This triangle represents the Buddha's inner fire of wisdom which destroys the power of Mara, the evil one. This triangle also represents the Buddha's "self-enjoyment-wisdom-body," while the bodhisattvas

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[1] Ibid.

surrounding him represent his out-going virtues operative in the work of universal salvation. The lotus seat upon which the triangle rests signifies reason, while the triangle stands for wisdom, showing that wisdom has its abode in reason.

Below the central assembly is the Jimyo-in (holding-light enclosure).[1] There are five holy ones, Hannya Bosatsu (Prajnaparamita Bodhisattva) and four Myo-Os (Vidyaraja)--Yamantaka, Trilokavidyaraja, Vajrahumkara Trailokavijaya, and Acalavidyaraja (Fudo Myo-O).

On the right hand of the central assembly we find the Kwannon-in (Avalokitesvaravriti).[2] In this assembly, there are twenty-one bodhisattvas, including Tara, Bato (Hayagriva), and Buzai (literally "rich prosperity"). On the left of the central assembly is the Kongo (Vajra) assembly of the bodhisattvas of wisdom.[3] They all hold some kind of vajra, which is the symbol of this family. The one-pointed vajra represents the enlightened mind of one's real nature. The three-pointed vajra symbolizes that Buddha, Beings, and Mind are one. The five-pointed vajra represents the five wisdoms. North of the Henchi-in is the Shaka-in (Sakyavriti).[4] The central figure of this assembly is Sakyamuni. On his right is Kokuzo Bosatsu and on the left Kwannon Bosatsu with two attendants, Munosho and Munoshohi. Seated on the lower right of Sakyamuni are eight Buddhas. North of the Shaka-in is the Monju-in (Manjusrivriti).[5] Manjusri represents Wisdom. The difference between the wisdom of the vajra family and that of Manjusri

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[1]Ibid. [2]Ibid. [3]Ibid. [4]Ibid. [5]Ibid.

is that the former is the inner wisdom of Buddha while the latter displays it in action. Extending from right to left of the mandala below the Godai-in is the Kokuzo-in (Akasagarbhavriti).[1] Akasagarbha represents the fruit of the Tathagata and the three families of Buddha, Lotus and Vajra. Kokuzo signifies the womb of Vairocana in which are contained happiness and wisdom. Below the Kokuzo-in is the Soshitsu-in (Susiddhivriti)[2] which properly belongs to Kokuzo-in, but is separated to match the four fields at the top. Susiddhi represents the excellent attainment of the bodhisattvas belonging to Kokuzo-in. At the end of this assembly is a figure of the Senju Kwannon (Sahasrabhujarya-Avalokitesvara), whose name means "the thousand-handed and thousand-eyed Kwannon." The "thousand" means "innumerable" or "complete," signifying that he has innumerable means to show compassion to sentient beings. He became a popular Kwannon in Japan. On the left side is also the Jizo-in (Kshitigarbhavriti).[3] Jizo means "treasure-holding earth," and his Bodhi-mind is hard as a diamond, so he is able to suffer pain on behalf of sentient beings. He is considered the patron of travelers and the protector of children. On the right side is also the Jokaisho-in ("removing-covering-obstacle assembly").[4] All the bodhisattvas of this assembly try to deliver beings from difficulties; their action is outward, entirely for the benefit of others.

The extreme outer circle of the mandala is called the Genkongo or Kongobu-in (Vajranubhavavriti).[5] Among the figures

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 96. [4] Ibid., p. 98

[5] Ibid.

are not only deities but those who are not yet saved. At the northeastern corner stands Isana and his wife, Isani. Isana was a fire or wind deity and was later identified with the Hindu god, Siva. Brahma is also included under the name of Bonten; he has four faces. There is a sheep and a bull belonging to the Twelve Houses of Astrology. Among the six celestial gods are Agni, who is known as Kwaten, and his wife, Agnayi, who is called Kwatenko. There are symbols of the constellations; including Mokuryo (Jupiter) and Kwayo (Mars), with a staff representing nine planets. Asuraraja, king of the Asuras, holds a flower staff, and Yamaraja, the god of death, is accompanied by Kalaratri, the lady of darkness. Below Yamaraja is Citragupta who carries a mirror which reflects men's deeds: Gaki or hungry ghosts precede him. Hindu water deities, Varuna (Suiten) and Varunani (Suitenhi), and Visnuite deities, Narayana (Narayenten) and Narayani (Narayendenhi), are also included in this assembly.

The Kongokai mandala is of four kinds: (1) Maha-mandala (the great circle) is the circle of the Buddha and his companies represented by pictures or painted figures; (2) Samaya-mandala (the symbol circle) is the circle of the same assembly represented by sumbols or an article, such as the sword, possessed by each; (3) Dharma-mandala (the law circle) is the circle of letters (vija-aksara) representing all the saintly beings; (Karma-mandala is the circle of sculptured figures, representing their actions. The four-fold circle indicates the efficacious power of the three mysteries. The figures show the mystery of the body of the Buddha, the letters show the mystery of speech of the Buddha, and the sym-

bol indicates the "original vow," the thought of the Buddha.[1]

Moreover, there are nine assemblies in the Kongokai mandala: (1) The Karmadparshad (Katsuma-e) is the action assembly, representing the dignified forms and actions of the objects worshipped. This assembly corresponds to the first of the four mandalas--Maha-mandala. If we minutely count them, there are 1,061 worthies in this assembly, but they are usually reduced to thirty-seven according to the number of their good qualities (or division of perfect knowledge). The thirty-seven divisions of perfect knowledge are divided into the classes of wisdom and meditation. (2) The Samaya-parshad (Sammaiya-e) is the agreement assembly, corresponding to the Samaya-mandala. The worthies of this assembly have the appearance of weapons and Mudras or seals according to their original vow. (3) The Sukshma-parshad (Misai-e) is the minute assembly, corresponding to the Dharma-mandala. This represents the minute virtues such as five kinds of wisdom of the worthies. (4) The Mahapuja-parshad (Daikujo-e) is the great worshipping assembly, corresponding to the Karma-mandala. (5) The Katur-mudra-parshad (Shi-in-e) is the seal assembly. (Mahavairocana is placed in the middle of these five assemblies, showing that the cause itself is the effect.) (6) The Eka mudra-parshad (Ichi-in-e) is the one-seal assembly, representing the one seal of Mahavairocana. There is only one worthy in this assembly. (7) The Buddhigati-parshad (Rishu-e) is the reason-state assembly. It has seventeen worthies, Vajrasattva being placed in the middle. Mahavairocana of the preceding six assemblies manifests himself as Vajrasattva in this

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[1]Takakusu, op. cit., p. 151.

assembly and benefits living beings. This shows that the effect is the cause. (8) The Trailokya-vijaya-karma-parshad (Gosanze-katsuma-e) is the three-world-subduing-action assembly with seventy-seven worthies in it. It shows the state of the Mahakrodha-kaya (great-anger body") manifested by Vajrasattva to destroy the enemies of the three worlds--covetousness, anger, and foolishness. (9) The Trailokya-vajaya-samaya-parshad (Gosanze-sammaiya-e) is the three-world-subduing-agreement assembly with seventy-three worthies in it. It shows the state of the form of Samaya, or agreement of Vajrasattva, who holds the bow and arrow to warn living beings. It should be noted that the order of these nine assemblies is of two kinds, as the picture in Nanjio's book shows.[1] The order followed here is from root to completion. If we speak of becoming Buddha, then the Trailokya-vijaya-samaya-parshad is the first, and the Karma-parshad is the end. The former order is from self-enlightenment to subjugation, and the latter from subjugation to self-enlightenment. Anesaki explains these two orders as follows:

> The Diamond cycle . . . is a graphic representation of the emanation and gradual evolution of the indestructible prototypes, or eternal ideas, from the Great Illuminator. It contains nine squares. . . . The rectangular border enclosing these circular groups is twofold: in the inner one are gathered the thousand Buddhas who have appeared as leaders of mankind in the different world-periods; and the outer one is studded with various gods of nature or of the Hindu pantheon, such as the Sun, the Moon, Brahma, Indra, etc. These are intended to signify that, as the leaders of men and gods, they are the manifestations of one and the same cosmic soul, and may be companions to the souls of those who live in harmony with the cosmic life and in the Great Illuminator.
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> The central square contains one thousand and sixty-one figures and shows the extremely complicated character of the mind, both cosmic and individual; but on the other hand the mind, as a well-concentrated unity, may be symbolized in the

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[1]Nanjio, A Short History of The Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, p. 91.

> perfect person of the Great Illuminator. This state of unity is represented in the upper middle square of the Diamond Cycle, where the Great Illuminator sits alone on a lotus in an attitude of lofty composure, surrounded by an aureola of bright flame and completely enclosed within a circle of pure white light.
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> . . . .
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> His face is expressive of absolute serenity, his posture of an inviolable dignity, and his hands are clasped together in the gesture symbolic of full illumination. The square itself is bounded by a twofold rectangular border, filled with a graceful design of flowers and clouds instead of deities and emblems such as appear in the borders of other squares. Here, then in the squares of the Diamond Cycle, we see contrasted the various aspects of the cosmic soul: its diversity, as expressed in the central group of over one thousand deities, and its unity, as embodies in the figure of the Great Illuminator.[1]

To an initiated Shingon follower the two mandalas of Taizokai and Kongokai are mirrors of the world and the secret solution of the most complicated metaphysical and religious problems. From the Kongokai proceeds that wisdom which leads to universal salvation; from the Taizokai proceeds that wisdom which works for the salvation of others. It is said that in the Kongokai reside the five sciences: (1) the science of the mirror, reflecting the elements of the world; (2) the science of equality, which considers things as they are without attempting to classify them; (3) the science of the just look or moral law, which distinguishes between right and wrong; (4) the science of the evolution of things, being the wisdom to become the substance of things; (5) the science of duty, which teaches the salvation of oneself and others. To these sciences correspond, mystically in the Taizokai mandala, five of the six great elements of the universe--earth, ether, fire, water, and air. The sixth element, consciousness or understanding, is included in the Kongokai. In reality, the Taizokai and Kongokai

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[1] Anesaki, Buddhist Art, pp. 39-41.

are one. It is only on the analytical plane that the world can be taken apart and described in two such diagrams. Our mind must reconstitute a synthesis.[1] An outstanding synthesis was attempted by Kukai, the founder of the Shingon school in Japan.

In discussing Kukai's theological system, it is well to bear in mind what Eliot says:

> It is doubtful how far Shingon as we see it in Japan is the system which Kobo Daishi learnt in China and how far it is a reconstruction due to himself or to the well-known Japanese habit of borrowing but at the same time changing. Obviously a copious pantheon and multitudinous rites can easily have degenerated into a magical ritual, which is the principal contribution of the Ch'en-yen to Chinese Buddhism. Later Buddhism in India also does not seem to have had many admirable sides, and even in the new forms which it assumed when imported into Tibet and Java its chief merit lies less in thought than in art. . . . But the Shingon of Kobo Daishi, though it does not altogether escape the danger of becoming mere magic, has the merit of being a well-thought-out system illustrated by an art which if it sometimes becomes conventional and tiresome . . . is capable of being sometimes awe-inspiring and sometimes of evoking visions of peace, calm, and benevolence.[2]

As mentioned earlier, Kukai was a child of his age. He was oriented to Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, and Buddhism in his youth. His struggle lasted until he discovered, at least to his own satisfaction, the harmony of "reason and faith" in esoteric Buddhism. But in so doing, Kukai reinterpreted esoteric Buddhism with his particular concerns. Basically, Kukai interpreted Richi or reason in two ways: the Shotoku or Shogu, the intuitive function of the mind for moral and ethical choices which is often hindered by human desire; the Shutoku which is acquired by educational processes. On the other hand, Shinko or faith is an atti-

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

[2]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 340.

tude to accept the truth given by sages, and Kukai classifies it into Meishin or superstition, which accepts false values, and Shinshin or true faith, which accepts truth values. Kukai attempted to distinguish "true" and "false" values by three principles: Shogu (intuitive reason), Shutoku (acquired reason), and Buddha's witness (faith). If two of these three principles affirmed an idea, it was taken to be "true" by Kukai. Historically, among Buddhists, there were two schools of thought. One was represented by Theraveda (Elders' School), Asanga, and Vasubandhu, who stressed experience and acquired reason. The other was represented by Mahasangikas, Nagarjuna, and Aryadeva, who stressed intuitive reason. Kukai, implicitly at least, accepted the priority of acquired reason, though he did not neglect intuitive reason and faith principles. Throughout his life, he tried to find certainty in objective reality, which to him meant that all creatures and all things have a common origin of the same spiritual essence as Buddha himself. In order to bring the uninitiated to this lofty truth, Kukai accepted the means of accommodation; he tried to meet all kinds of needs of people, including mundane desires. On the other hand, he founded Sogeishuchi-in, a school of liberal education, to meet the intellectual queries of youth. He himself experienced serious intellectual inquiry in his youth, but after his return from China he devoted his life to what might be called apologetics; he spoke as a man who had discovered the truth.[1]

As mentioned earlier, Kukai developed a comprehensive theological system based on esoteric Buddhism. In developing his

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[1]Ryujo Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, pp. 3-25.

theological system, Kukai had apologetic concerns to stress: (1) the founder of the Shingon school and the validity of succession of patriarchs, (2) the validity of the Shingon doctrine, (3) the necessity of the Shingon Sangha. The validity of the succession of patriarchs was discussed earlier in connection with the development of esoteric Buddhism in India and China. The Shingon Sangha will be discussed in connection with Kukai's Goyuikoku or will. Now we shall discuss some of the highlights of his doctrines.

Kukai developed a twofold system of doctrine. The first was the distinction between Kengyo, or revealed teaching of Buddha, and Mikkyo, or unrevealed teaching of Buddha. The second was the famous "Ten Stages of Spiritual Development."

First, we shall examine Kukai's Benkemmitsu-nikyoron or "Treatise on Two Teachings--Revealed and Unrevealed."[1] Kukai claims that all the teachings preached by Sakyamuni are apparent or revealed teachings, while the teachings delivered by the Dharmakaya (Hosshin) or spiritual body alone are hidden or secret (unrevealed). The former include all the doctrines except the Shingon (true word), and they are exoteric because they are taught by the manifested body, the absolute truth being hidden. The exoteric teaching is temporal and it teaches how to become a Buddha by practising for many years; the process is from the lower to the higher. Kukai claims that the Shingon alone is the direct speech of the Dharmakaya Vairocana, and it teaches how to become Buddha at once in this very body by means of Sammitsu or three secrets. Accord-

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[1]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 15-45.

ing to the Shingon, we are to realize the Dharmakaya and the Great Self with this very body. Kukai is convinced that the Shingon shows the divine substance and activity of the Tathagata. He felt that the Kegon school in its doctrine of Ji ji muge (that the world of all realities is interwoven in perfect harmony by mutual penetration so as to realize the ideal world of One-true) came the closest to enlightenment; therefore, it was only a step behind the Shingon.

In exoteric teaching there are Buddhas and beings, but in the Shingon system there is only one reality, "the One," in which all have an individual and conscious part. Such a teaching of the Shingon is to be understood only by those prepared to receive it in their spiritual bodies, that is, by their spiritual conception of consciousness. His argument runs in the following manner. First, he attempts to prove the existence of Dharmakaya Mahavairocana and that he teaches the secret doctrine. In the exoteric teaching, Dharmakaya is called "truth-body" but is considered formless and colorless. Kukai formulates his theory that Dharmakaya has a body and preaches the law. Second, Kukai argues that exoteric teaching was given by Sakyamuni who could not teach the highest truth because he adapted to the level of hearers of all kinds; while esoteric teaching is the Law understood secretly by Buddha and given to his own disciples, like familiar conversation among relatives. In this connection, Kukai divides people into those who seek the universal truth and those who have no faith. He insists that it is unwise to cast pearls before swine and that powerful medicines cannot be given to those who do not know how to use

them properly; hence, it is better not to give instruction until the hearer is fitted to receive it. Third, Kukai acknowledges that both the Tendai and the Kegon teach Ekayana (one-vehicle), which enable men to become Buddha in this body, but contends that both of these schools only recognize the theoretical possibility, while the Shingon alone makes it a practical reality. In his Benkemmitsu-nikyoron, Kukai quotes a passage from Vajrasekhara-sutra which says: "If you practise exoteric teaching you must spend hundreds of thousands of years of discipline to attain Nirvana, but if you practise esoteric teaching you must attain it in your physical body without spending endless time upon it."[1] Prior to Kukai, the distinction of exoteric and esoteric teachings was attempted by Subhakarasinha and Amoghavajra, both of whom included in the category of esoteric teaching not only Mahavairocana-sutra and Vajrasekhara-sutra, but Lotus-sutra, Avatansaka-sutra, and Nirvana-sutra. This position was handed down to Taimitsu or the Tendai school in Japan. As mentioned earlier, the Tendai's position is safer from the standpoint of historical Buddhology and the Shingon's position is a unique one.

We turn our attention to two of Kukai's writings--Hizohoyaku[2] and Himitsumandara-jujushin-ron.[3] Both of these discuss the ten stages of spiritual growth from Kukai's perspective. Anesaki translates the introduction of Hizohoyaku ("The Jewel Key to the Store of Mysteries") as follows:

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[1]Ibid., p. 36; Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, pp. 197-198.

[2]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 57-111. [3]Ibid., pp. 113-464.

"Vast, vast, extremely vast
Are the scrolls of yellow silk [Buddhist scriptures]
Hundreds and thousands 'In' [Buddhism] and 'Out' [Confucianism and Brahmanism]
Profound, profound, very profound
Ways are marked and ways shown, hundred of ways.
What benefit in writing and reading, finally to die?
Unknown and unknowable, self never knows self;
Thinking, thinking, and thinking, yet no sign of wisdom!

Mad are beings in the three realms of existence,
And none aware of his own madness!
Blind are beings, four in the modes of their birth,
Yet all unaware of their blindness!

Born, born, and reborn without limit,
And still dark as to the origin of birth;
Dying, dying, and dying without end,
Yet veiled is the ultimate goal of life."[1]

The ten stages of thought are originally enumerated in the chapter on the "Stages of Thought" in Mahavairocana-sutra. They are the names used to illustrate ten different stages of the thought of living beings. Kukai took them and used them to show the differences of different religious schools.[2] According to Kukai, the first nine stages belong to exoteric teaching and the tenth alone to esoteric teaching. However, in one sense, it may be said that all ten belong to esotericism, the first nine being considered lower or preparatory stages for the last. A Shingon believer must go through these preparatory stages, consciously or unconsciously. Nevertheless, we must not be content with relative perfection but proceed to the final enlightenment. The first stage, according to Kukai, is called Isho-teiyo-shin (the thought of the

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[1]Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion, pp. 131-132.

[2]Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 82-83.

Goat in another existence).[1] The goat symbolizes man in a bestial state of existence. At this level man obeys only his lowest instincts--appetite and sex. There is no consciousness of the distinction between good and evil. The second stage is called Gudo-jisai-shin (the thought of the adolescent).[2] Light has not yet penetrated the being; he does not yet understand but respects the rules and commandments without understanding their spiritual import. Among religious systems it corresponds to Confucianism which teaches the five cardinal virtues--pity, justice, politeness, wisdom, prudence--and the five relations--lord and vassal, parent and children, husband and wife, brother and sister, friends. Again, in the case of the path of the Shingon, this is the first state of the Samaya or meditation. It is to be noted that Kukai had anticipated this observation of Confucianism in his Sangoshiki. The third stage is called Eido-mui-shin (the thought of the child delivered from his terrors).[3] This is the state of those who have religious aspirations but who merely desire to attain supernatural powers without having knowledge of their value nor of the method of attaining them. This is the state of Brahmanism and Taoism which teach people to stop and fix themselves in their own personal visions. In the path of the Shingon, this is the state of the ten precepts. The fourth stage is called Yuiun-muga-shin (conscience

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[1] Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 97-98; Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 60-63 and 113-173; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 341.

[2] Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 98; Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 63-65, 174-230; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, pp. 341-342.

[3] Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 98-99; Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 65-70, 231-274; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 342.

of the aggregates devoid of self).[1] This is characteristic of the Sravakas (Shomon) who realizes that there is no self within a living being, which consists of the five Skandhas--Rupa (form), Vedana (perception), Samjnana (name), Samskara (conception), Vajnana (knowledge). Kukai incorporated the Kusha (Abhidharma-Kosa) school into this stage. Here the man strives to enter Nirvana by meditating upon the Four Noble Truths but falls into the error of nihilism. The fifth stage is called Batsugo-inshu-shin (the thought of exterminating the seed and the causes of passions).[2] The term go means passion, in means the twelve causes, and shu means seed (Avidya or darkness). This is the stage reached by the Pratyeka-buddha (Engaku in Japanese) or individual Buddha. The individual Buddha meditates upon the Twelve Nidanas, through which he realizes the real nature of transmigration (samsara). The idea is to be emancipated from re-birth. The cause or rebirth is Karma, which is caused by delusion, which in turn is caused by ignorance (avidya). To extinguish shu (avidya) is to root out the cause of Karma by means of the in (twelve nidanas). Kukai attempts to incorporate the beliefs of the Hinayana leading up to the superior illumination of Mahayana into the fourth and the fifth stages. He thinks a follower of the Shingon goes through these stages before reaching the state of meditation, in which any object is contemplated as having no nature, like an image in a mirror.

The sixth stage is called Taen-daijo-shin (the thought of

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 99; Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 71-85, 275-304; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 342.

[2]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 99; Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 85-89, 305-321; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 342.

the great vehicle for the salvation of others).[1] This stage corresponds to the teaching of the Hosso (Vijnaptimatrata or Yogacara) school. Actually, the Shingon world-view is deeply indebted to the Yogacara doctrine of Yuishiki (mere ideation), which attributes the existence of all the outer world to inner ideation. Having understood the truth that there is nothing but thought, one develops an unlimited compassion for others. In this stage, the ideal is to attain enlightenment for self and others through the practice of the six paramitas. In this stage it is realized that the three worlds (Kalpas) and all the Dharmas are produced by one mind and that we can get rid of attachment and a wrong view of life. The seventh, eighth and ninth stages correspond to three Mahayana schools. The seventh stage is called Ka-kushin-fusho-shin (the thought conscious of the negative).[2] This is the tenet of the Sanron (Madhyamika) school. The Kakushin or understanding thought signifies that the impure thought itself is originally pure. Fusho, which means without production, is the first of the eight terms to explain the Middle Path (Madhyamapratipad).[3] By practicing the Middle Path, one comes to realize that the absolute, the Bhutatathata, alone is real. The eighth stage is called Ichido-mui-shin (the thought of one vehicle of salvation).[4] This corresponds to

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 99-100; Yamamoto, Kobodaishi, pp. 90-92 322-380; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 342.

[2]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 100; Yamamoto, Kobodaishi, pp. 92-95, 381-401; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 342.

[3]Stcherbatsky, The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana, p. 81.

[4]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 100; Yamamoto, Kobodaishi, pp. 95-98, 402-414; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 342.

the Tendai doctrine of "one way without action," which means that ultimate reality is identical with our experience of the phenomenal world. The term Ichido means one vehicle or one path, and it is often called Ichinyo or one suchness, signifying the Saddharma-pundarika. The Tendai tries to realize the real nature of the mind, which is pure, through a knowledge of the three truths of non-being, being, and the middle. The term mui means "without doing" and signifies the true form. The ninth stage is called Gokumu-jisho-shin (absolute thought of nature in itself).[1] The term Goku means extreme or best. Kukai regarded the Kegon (Avatansaka) doctrine the closest to the Shingon, though he did not classify the Kegon as esoteric. According to the Kegon teaching, the absolute truth transcends the nature of self but is realized in the ceaseless activity of the universe. Kukai quotes Fa-tsang (643-712), the real systematizer of the Kegon system (generally known by his posthumous name Hsien-Shou) who interpreted Shinnyo or the absolute in relation to beings and phenomena; Jisho, or self-nature of the truth, is not concealed. Actually, the Kegon doctrine of interpenetration of all realities is very close to Kukai's world-view. The tenth and last stage is called Himitsu-shogon-shin (thought embellished by the mystery).[2] This is the Shingon teaching. The Himitsu is the hidden or secret practice

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 100; Yamamoto, Kobodaishi, pp. 99-104, 415-446; Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, pp. 342-343.

[2]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 101; Yamamoto, Kobodaishi, pp. 104-111, 447-464; Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 87-88.

of the Sammitsu (three secrets) of the Tathagata. Kukai says that the apparent or exoteric teachings drive away the outer dust, and the Shingon or True Word opens the store of hidden truth. The Shingon teaches that the origin of all beings is in the six great elements which are the source of all existing phenomena. This is an attempt to understand the world from within, for man and the universe are essentially Mahavairocana himself. In other words, Mahavairocana is a metaphysical principle, and everything, even a piece of dust, is an expression of him.

Concerning Kukai's system of the ten stages, Eliot remarks that whereas in the first nine stages, the evolution of thought is treated as being the only means of discovering the mystery of the universe, in the tenth stage this principle is suddenly supplemented by esoteric doctrine.[1] Kambayashi, after examining carefully the sources of Kukai's division of spiritual growth, states that the sixth to the tenth stages are based on shaky ground.[2] It is probable that Kukai followed the example of Fa-tsang, who classified the Buddhist teaching into "five aspects" (Gokyo in Japanese) and "ten doctrines" (Jusshu in Japanese).[3] As mentioned earlier, Amoghavajra and I-hsing hinted at the division of Buddhist doctrine into exoteric and esoteric schools, but their division was horizontal and not vertical as Kukai attempted. Kukai is on safer ground in his treatise on exoteric and esoteric doctrines--Benkemmitsu-nikyoron--than in his writings on the ten sta-

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 344.

[2]Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, p. 155.

[3]Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 114-118.

ges of spiritual growth. His ten stages were later bitterly criticized by Enchin or Chisho-daishi (814-891) who was Kukai's own nephew, by Annen (841-900?) who systematized the Taimitsu, by Honen (1133-1212) who founded the Jodo school, and by Nichiren (1222-1282) who founded the Nichiren school.[1] The most logical argument against Kukai's system was advanced by Honen.

> Honen severly criticized Kobo Daishi for having arranged the various Buddhist sects in an ascending scale of truth. His periphrasis of the last five stages is appreciative, for he defines them as "(6) the heart which makes the welfare of others its aim; (7) the illuminated heart which has transcended all illusions such as birth and death; (8) the heart which has entered on the middle way, having transcended the states of relative being and the absolute; (9) the heart which realizes that nothing has an independent nature of its own but that everything exists in virtue of its relations to other things as well as to the absolute; and (10) the heart which rising completely above exoteric doctrine, or what is taught by a Buddha in human form, enters into the very heart of the Absolute Buddha." But he objects to the graded classification of sects and the sutras on which they are founded as likely to produce only ill-will. The Buddha revealed various doctrines, each amplifying one point, some likely to appeal to one class of intellect and some to another, but to make them like the rungs of a ladder, each one higher than the last, is most objectionable. Indeed, it is clear that the order of ascending merit laid down by Kobo Daishi is open to much argument.[2]

Although Kukai definitely implied a scale of values in his system of ten stages, his primary concern was to establish a synthetic religious system. His system is arbitrary and his sources are questionable, but he succeeded in presenting the idea that the essence of the self-enlightenment of Mahavairocana is the real form of the Tathagata and that his merciful activities are manifested in all parts of the universe. He states that the nature of the inherent Bodhicitta of all beings is also universal and

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[1]Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, pp. 160-172.

[2]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, p. 343.

eternal, as is the Tathagata, and that if a being realizes his real nature he becomes one with the essence of the Tathagata's enlightenment and enters the eternal spiritual life with the Tathagata. Anesaki comments:

> The highest, the tenth stage is attained by Shingon Buddhism which is not a mere system of doctrine but the actual embodiment of the life and idea of the Great Illuminator, especially in the performance of mystic rites. Kukai sums up his religion as follows:
>
> The healing power of the exoteric doctrine has wiped away all dust;
> Now opens the store of the True Word (Shingon),
> In which all hidden treasures are brought to light,
> And there embodied are all virtues and powers.
>
> This condition of spiritual development is called "The Soul filled with the Glories of Mystery," which is further characterized thus:
>
> The Buddhas in the innumerable Buddha-lands
> Are naught but the Buddha within our own soul;
> The Golden Lotus, as Multitudinous as the drops
> of ocean water, is living in our body.
> Myriads of figures are contained in every mystic letter;
> Every piece of chiselled metal embodies a Deity,
> In whom are pregnantly present the real entities of
> Virtue and Merit.
> In realizing all this every one shall atain
> The glories of being, even in this corporeal life.
>
> In sum, all the arguments and dialectics of Kukai had as objective the justification and glorification of the mystic practices through which he influenced his age and posterity.[1]

As Anesaki clearly states, Kukai was preoccupied with mystic practices which, to him, were the method of salvation. His doctrine of salvation is expounded in his Sokushin-jobutsu-gi[2] (literally, the attainment of Buddhahood by the present body). Soteriology is the central issue in Kukai's theological system.

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[1]Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion, p. 133.

[2]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 3-14.

We shall discuss some of the key ideas utilized in his doctrine of Sokushin-jobutsu. As mentioned earlier, Kukai accepts the Shingon world-view, often called cosmotheism, which defines the total cosmos, including its spiritual and material aspects; and Buddha rules it, not from above, but from within. In the context of this world-view, the concept of Mahabhutas (great elements) had to be radically transformed. Historically, Buddhist metaphysics was based on the idea that existence is an interplay of a plurality of subtle, ultimate, not further analyzable elements of Matter, Mind, and Forces. These elements are technically called dharmas. Buddhism, therefore, can be characterized as a system of Radical Pluralism (sanghata-vada) which contends that the elements alone are realities; every combination of them is a mere name covering a plurality of separate elements. Stcherbatsky summarizes the main tenets of Buddhism as follows:

> 1. Every element is a separate . . . entity or force.
> 2. There is no inherence of one element in another, hence no substance apart from its qualities, no Matter beyond the separate sense-data, and no Soul beyond the separate mental data (dharma--anatman--nirjiva).
> 3. Elements have no duration, every moment represents a separate element; thought is evanescent, there are no moving bodies, but consecutive appearances, flashing, of new elements in new places (Ksanikatva).
> 4. The elements co-operate with one another (samskrta).
> 5. This co-operating activity is controlled by the laws of causation (Pratitya-samutpada).
> 6. The world-process is thus a process of co-operation between seventy-two kinds of subtle, evanescent elements, and such is the nature of dharmas that they proceed from causes . . . and steer towards extinction (nirodha).
> 7. Influenced (sasrava) by the element avidya (ignorance or blindness), the process is in full swing. Influenced by the element prajna (wisdom), it has a tendency towards appeasement and final extinction. In the first case streams . . . of combining elements are produced which correspond to ordinary men . . . in the second the stream represents a saint. . . . The complete stoppage of the process of phenomenal life corresponds to a Buddha.

> 8. Hence the elements are broadly divided into unrest (dukkha), cause of unrest (dukkha-samudaya--avidya), extinction (nirodha), and cause of extinction (marga--prajna).
>
> 9. The final result of the world-process is its suppression, Absolute Calm: all co-operation is extinct and replaced by immutability (asamskrta--nirvana).
>
> Since all these particular doctrines are logically developed out of one fundamental principle, Buddhism can be resolved in a series of equations; dharmata--nairatmya (soullessness)--ksanikatva--samskrtatva--pratitya-samutpannatva--sasrava-anasravatva--samkleca-vyavadanatva--dukkha-nirodha--samsara-nirvana.
>
> But, although the conception of an element of existence has given rise to an imposing superstructure in the shape of a consistent system of philosophy, its inmost nature remains a riddle. What is dharma? It is inconceivable. . . . It is transcendental.[1]

The Sarvastivadin school admitted the existence of seventy-five elements called dharmas. The simple classification of all dharmas is divided into five: (1) matter, (2) feeling, (3) ideas, (4) volition and other faculties, (5) pure sensation and general consciousness; they are called rupa, vedana, samjna, samskara, and vijnana respectively. According to Stcherbatsky, rupa or matter is distributed into ten items. The term rupa-ayatana is reserved for visible matter, and the general characteristic of material elements is impenetrability, which signifies that space occupied by one of them cannot be occupied by another at the same time. It is to be noted that only matter of sense-data are recognized. They are broadly divided into two categories: objective sense-data constituting external objects and sense-organs which are translucent subtle matter covering the body when it is living. The translucent matter of the sense-organs resembles the shining of a jewel; it cannot be cut in two, it cannot be burnt, it has

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[1]Th. Stcherbatsky, The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word "Dharma," pp. 74-75.

no weight, and it disappears without a residue at death. Being as subtle as the shining of a jewel, this matter cannot appear alone; it is supported by gross matter (mahabhuta), of which the eye-ball and flesh in general consist. The atoms of external matter are likewise divided into atoms of general, universal, or fundamental matter, and special atoms including atoms of colour, sound, and tangibility. The fundamental elements are four in number; they are manifested by the facts of hardness, cohesion, heat, and motion. Conventionally they are called earth, water, fire and air. These four elements always appear together, always in equal proportion. There is as much element of heat in a blazing fire as there is in wood or water, the difference being only in intensity. The general elements of mahabhuta (matter) are brought under the head of tangibles.[1]

In contrast to "matter," "mental" elements are divided into feelings, ideas, volitions, and pure sensation or general consciousness. In general, however, the pre-Buddhistic term nama-rupa or matter and mind are used; rupa represents the elements of matter and nama includes the four mental classes. Rupa is divided into two parts--the subjective and objective. The subjective part or mind viewed as a receptive faculty is called citta, vijnana, or manas. It represents pure consciousness, or pure sensation, without any content. Its content is placed in the objective part, which has forty-six elements, including the definite sensation (sparca), feeling (vedana), ideas (sanjna), and volitions (cetana). Besides the forty-six mental phenomena it contains the

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[1] Ibid., pp. 6-15.

elementary forces, the element of character, and the three eternal elements (<u>asamskrta</u>). Among the eternal elements is <u>Nirvana</u>, the chief <u>dharma</u>.[1]

Kukai, following Yogacara, developed his concept of <u>maha-bhutas</u> (great elements).[2] According to him, these great elements--earth, water, fire, air, ether, knowledge--exist everywhere. If they are divided between the "Two Parts," the first five are reason, corresponding to the <u>Garbha-dhatu</u> (<u>Taizokai</u>), and the last is wisdom, being the <u>Vajra-dhatu</u> (<u>Kongokai</u>). But the Shingon world-view is monistic, and reason and wisdom are essentially not two but one, so that there is no knowledge besides the first five elements, and vice versa. If the sixth element which is <u>vijnana</u> (knowledge) is divided into five elements, there are <u>Gochi</u> (five wisdoms): (1) <u>Hokai-taisho-chi</u> (thing-element-substance-nature-wisdom), or the <u>Dharmadhatu-prokrit-jnana</u>, corresponds to the element of ether, being the wisdom to become the substance of things; (2) <u>Daienkyo-chi</u> (great-round-mirror-wisdom), or the <u>Adarsana-jnana</u>, corresponds to the element of earth, manifesting the images of all things just as in the mirror; (3) <u>Byodosho-chi</u> (even-equal-nature-wisdom), or the <u>Samata-jnana</u>, corresponds to the element of fire, making no distinction between this and that while looking at the things; (4) <u>Myokwan-zatsu-chi</u> (well-looking-considering-wisdom), or the <u>Praty-avekshana-jnana</u>, corresponds to the element of water, being the wisdom that governs the act of preaching the Law and

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[1]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 15.

[2]Stcherbatsky, <u>The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana</u>, pp. 34-35.

destroying doubts; (5) Joshosa-chi (wisdom of accomplishing what is to be done), or the Krityanushthana-jnana, corresponds to the element of air, being the wisdom of completing the good action of helping both one's own self and others (this compassion is, however, not permanent).[1] Moreover, Kukai made an assertion that the four bodies of Buddha are also composed of the six great elements. In other words, since Kukai recognized the interpenetration of Mahavairocana and other beings, everything has the common mahabhutas. This is a repudiation of the historic Buddhist world-view of pluralism; it may be called radical monism, which ascribes absolute reality only to the whole.[2] The concept of Mahabhutas (great elements) also was interpreted from this monistic perspective.

Another important key idea in Kukai's doctrine of Sokishin-jobutsu is Sammitsu-so-o (the Yoga or union of the three secrets). Steinilber-Oberlin quotes extracts from the Shido-inzu (Seals of the Four Rites) in which Sammitsu is explained:

> The Kengio school [revealed teaching] teaches the theory of the doctrine, but does not teach which acts one should accomplish, or the degree of wisdom one should acquire, in order to attain Buddhahood. The mikio [esoteric] school alone teaches the acts which produce the incarnation of the Bodai (Sanskrit: Bodhi). The Acts of Incarnation constitute the teaching of the San-Mitsu.
>
> What is the San-Mitsu?
>
> The San-Mitsu, or the Three Mysteries, consists in three different kinds of acts:
>
> 1. Acts of Kuan-Neen, 'meditation,' i.e., meditation on the raison d'être of the great Buddhist laws.
>
> 2. Acts of Sin-gon, 'true words,' i.e., a scrupulously exact recitation of the words of the dharanis, the Sanskrit

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[1] Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 99-100.

[2] Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, pp. 220-227.

formulas endowed with unlimited powers.

3. Acts of si-In, 'hand-seal,' consisting of making mudra or Seals (cabalistic or mystical signs) with the fingers in order to acquire, in the life, the quality of Buddha.

Therefore the acts by which a priest becomes an incarnation of Buddha consist in accomplishing these Three Mysteries. We will, however, consider here only the third, that of the Seals.

In order to be initiated into these Mysteries it is, before all, necessary to have proven one's fidelity to the Buddhist religion, and one's unwavering faith in Buddha.

. . . .

The Kegonkyo says: 'One is all,' meaning that a single formula may have an immense virtue. Our commentary explains each formula. . . . For the celebration of the Rite of the Mysterious Laws it is necessary that all the elements of the rite, such as the site, the edifice, the altar, the cardinal points, the choice of a day, the vestments, the priest's food, the objects of worship, the offerings, the decorations of the hall, be complete and in conformity to rule. Besides all these material formalities it is indispensable that the officiating priest should have perfect faith in his religion. Then only can the miraculous effects resulting from the accomplishment of the Rite of the Mysterious Laws be produced.

. . . .

In the theory of the Seals the right hand symbolises the 'World of Buddhas,' and the left hand 'the World of Men.'

Each finger has a particular value.

The thumb signifies 'infinite space, void or ether.'
The index signifies the element, 'air or wind.'
The middle finger is the element 'fire.'
The fourth finger represents the element 'water.'
The little finger represents 'the earth.'[1]

It is to be noted that the three secrets of the body, speech, and thought of Buddha will remain mysterious forever if there is no means of communion. Such a communion should come from the mystic power (adhisthana, enfolding power) of Buddha and not from the side of the aspirant. The means itself is nothing but the manifestation of the mystic power, which can be expressed through the three activities of men in the three actions of body, speech, and thought. These are essentially identical; body is equal to speech, and speech is equal to thought. They all exist

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[1]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., pp. 116-118.

everywhere in the Dharma-dhatu (elements of things) and are called the Sammitsu. The form or body of Dharma-dhatu is that of the five elements, and it is the secret of body. This form produces sound, and it is the secret of speech. This form has the power and it is the secret of thought. These three secrets exist in things both animate and inanimate.[1] As mentioned earlier, the Shingon holds that the Dharma-kaya possesses both form and speech. But these are the states understood only by Buddha, and cannot be understood by ordinary men. According to the ritualistic prescription (vidhi or kalpa), the means of communion with Buddha has three aspects: mudra (finger-intertwining) and other attitudes on one's body, dharani (mystical verse) and other words of prayer, yoga (concentration). These three correspond to our three activities. Through the prescribed ritual we can realize the perfect communion with Buddha; hence, the theory of the Buddhahood attainable in this corporeal life through communion, or Sammitsu-so-o-Sokushin-jobutsu.[2] Steinilber-Oberlin quotes the word of Takaoka:

> All the activities of the world--the forms, sounds, colours, seasons--are but varied aspects of the essence of the universe. The self which is in man and things expresses itself from the exterior. All the activities of the world are but the radiation of the 'self.' One should study and meditate deeply the law of the Three Worlds, these Three Mysteries, and strive to understand what is meant by causality. One should then conform the rhythm of our life to cosmic guidance. . . .[3]

Anesaki makes the following comments:

> Religious acts are but manifestations of the "Three Mysteries" of the Great Illuminator; and any act, speech, or

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[1]Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 101-102.

[2]Takakusu, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

[3]Steinilber-Oberlin, op. cit., p. 109.

thought may evoke the mysterious powers of the deity, when done in faith and in harmony with the cosmic life activities. Understood in this way, symbols and mysteries find hardly any limit in their varieties and in the spheres of their use and application. They may be used for any purpose, even for torturing a hated fellow-creature as well as for the salvation of all fellow beings. The mysterious efficacy can be secured by a movement of the fingers, or by the utterance of a single formula, whereas a ceremony of great pomp and grandeur may be organized for the same purpose of calling mysterious powers. Herein lay the secret of Shingon Buddhism, by which it attracted all kinds of people and influenced the ambitious nobles and the simple people alike, that it promised to fulfil any sort or religious or other desires. We have also to note that painting and sculpture, dance and music, and other arts were necessary associates of the Shingon mysteries, and that the influence of Shingon upon the court nobles depended very much upon its artistic display.[1]

These key ideas--the Six Great Elements (Mahabhutas) and Three Mysteries (Sammitsu)--are the basis of Kukai's main thesis of soteriology, which is called Sokushin-jobutsu. In spite of his superstructure of metaphysical system, his religion is nothing but a realization of the inherent unity of the Cosmic Buddha (Mahavairocana) and all other beings. To be sure, a Shingon follower is expected to go through various stages of spiritual growth, but fundamentally his soteriology is based on the elevating power (adhisthana) of Mahavairocana. Once this union is established, every act of adoration of the aspirant acquires the power of evoking the mysterious power of the Cosmic Buddha or of any one of his manifestations. Such a state is called Jobutsu or becoming Buddha, and it is possible "in this very body" (Sokushin). Nanjio gives three explanations of this doctrine of Sokushin-jobutsu:

The first [Rigu or "reason completed"] is explained in the following word: The true form of body and thought of all living beings is the Mandala, or circle, of the Two Parts of Vajra

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[1]Anesaki, History of Japanese Religion, p. 129.

> and Garbha-dhatu. The flesh body is the reason of the first five elements, and it is the Garbha-dhatu; while the thought is the wisdom of the sixth element, knowledge, and it is the Vajra-dhatu. These wisdom and reason are originally completed in all living beings. This is technically called Ri-gu-soku-shin-jo-butsu, or 'the attainment of Buddhahood by the present body completed in reason.'
>
> The second [Kaji or "adding and holding"] is to make the originally completed Mandala . . . opened and manifested by the power of 'adding and holding' . . . of the three secrets.
>
> The third [Kentoku or "apparent obtaining"] is to reach the origin of one's own thought, obtain the Mandala, and attain to the final state of perfect enlightenment, after completing the practice of the three secrets.
>
> These three kinds of becoming Buddha are only difference in explanation, and in reality they are one and no distinction.
>
> The virtue completed in one's self and not obtained from others is the character of the first (Rigu). The ignorant people do not know it, but can perceive it by the power of 'adding and holding' of the Three Secrets. This is the second (Kaji). The third is to complete the practice and become the perfectly enlightened (Kentoku).[1]

Actually the doctrine of Sokushin-jobutsu is not explicitly taught in the two leading sutras of the Shingon school--Mahavairocana-sutra and Vajrasekhara-sutra. As stated earlier, Kukai referred to Dainichikyoso (I-hsing's commentary of Dainichikyo, based on Subhakarasinha's lectures) almost exclusively. But in this instance, Kukai does not refer to Dainichikyoso to support his doctrine of Sokushinjobutsu. Ironically, as Kambayashi points out, it is in Dainichikyoso that this doctrine is more clearly hinted than in Dainichikyo itself, and that Kukai's references to two portions of Dainichikyo as the scriptural basis of his soteriology is far-fetched.[2] Kambayashi also examines Kukai's quotations of portions of Vajrasekhara-sutra (Kongochokyo) and finds only a suggestion concerning Bodhicitta but no explicit doctrine of Soku-

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[1]Nanjio, A Short History of the Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects, pp. 102-103.

[2]Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, pp. 264-270.

shin-jobutsu.[1] Thus, Kambayashi comes to the conclusion that the doctrine of Sokushin-jobutsu existed in the mind of Subhakarasinha only in rudimentary form but was expounded by I-hsing in Dainichi-kyoso, and although Kukai did not quote any passage from Dainichi-kyoso to support his doctrinal formulation, he was inspired by it and elaborated on it.[2]

We can see Kukai's synthetic approach well manifested in the formulation of this doctrine. He learned from Vasubandhu's Bodhicittotpadana-sastra (Hatsubodaishin-ron in Japanese) that through searching for Buddha's wisdom, any person well versed in the meaning of Bodhicitta (Bodaishin) can ascend to enlightenment. Kukai interpreted Bodhi through the perspective of Mahavairocana-sutra, which does not recognize the duality of subject and object in the Heart of Bodhi. Therefore, Kukai concluded that the Heart of Bodhi is omniscient knowledge, and the Heart of Bodhi and omniscient knowledge ought to be sought in one's own heart. Furthermore, rejecting the historic interpretation of "Three Kalpas" (aeons or world periods),[3] Kukai interpreted "Three Kalpas" as "three kinds of passionate attachment seen in the ascending scale on the path of the Shingon." This interpretation was in Dainichi-kyoso, and Kukai expounded on it in his Hannyashinkyo-hiken (Mystical Key to Prajnaparamita-hrdaya-sutra).[4]

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[1] R. Kambayashi, "Kongocho-yugo-churyaku-shutasunenju-kyo," Kokuyaku-daizokyo-Mikkyo-bu, ed. Shinyu Iwano, Vol. V (1931).

[2] Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, pp. 270-272.

[3] Shinryo Mochizuki, Bukkyo-daijiten (Tokyo: Bukkyo-Daijiten Hakkosho, 1931), II, 1018-1021.

[4] Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 50-51.

Kukai arranged the doctrine of Mui (Vaisaradya, Abhaya, or "non-fear") to correspond to the notion of "Three Kalpas." "Three Kalpas" represents the negative aspect of destroying the passionate attachment, while "Six Muis" represent the positive side of acquiring Bodhicitta. These scales of "Three Kalpas" and "Six Muis" are arranged to correspond to the scale of "Ten Stages of Spiritual Growth," as we will show later. It is said the "Three Kalpas" is the passage from revealed teaching to esoteric teaching, and "Six Muis" is the esoteric passage from the beginning. According to the Shingon path of "Six Muis," one adores all the divinities of the mandala, and by means of Sammitsu (Three Mysteries) one opens the way to the original Pure heart of Bodhi. Tajima compares the exoteric and esoteric interpretations of "Six Muis": (1) Zen-mui or Sannirbhaya (which means "non-fear of the good") is interpreted in exoteric doctrine as a path of worldly beings--simple man or god--plunged into evil who are able to avoid evil and earn peace through the practice of five defenses and six good actions; in esoteric doctrine this path means penetrating the mandala and observing the Triple Mystery (Triguhya). (2) Shinmui or Kayanirbhaya (which means "non-fear of the body") is interpreted in exoteric doctrine as the path of meditating on the impurity of one's body and arriving at the state of Sravaka with no more fear; in esoteric doctrine this path means seeing the form of the divinity with eyes of the heart through the practice of the Triple Mystery. (3) Muga-mui or Nairatmyanirbhaya (which means "non-fear of non-self") means in exoteric doctrine that the Sravaka, knowing his body as a momentary combination of the five Skandhas, perceives the non-

reality of human personality and becomes an arhat; according to esoteric doctrine, a faithful of the Shingon, by the exercise of Yoga meditation on the unconditioned nature of his heart, succeeds in ridding himself of the attachment to his self and of the pride of his ego. (4) Ho-mui or Dharmanirbhaya (which means "non-fear of the dharma") is, in exoteric teaching, the path from an arhat to Pratyeka-buddha through the partial understanding of the nature of the Dharmas; in the Shingon, this means the realization that all forms resemble the reflection of the moon in the water. (5) Homugo-mui or Dharmanairatmyanirbhaya (which means "non-fear of non-reality of the dharmas") is, according to exoteric doctrine, the path of bodhisattva through realizing that the triple world is only the heart, and that outside the heart there is no independent dharma, and furthermore that his own heart itself is not real; in the Shingon this means that all forms that he preserves in the Yoga are aspects of his own heart, and he acquires the mystery of his heart. (6) Issaiho-byodo-mui or Sarva-dharma-samatanirbhaya (which means "non-fear of the identity of all the dharmas") in exoteric doctrine, is the path of a bodhisattva to the doctrine of the Ekayanavada through the understanding that all the dharmas are produced by causes and effects (never having proper nature), which leads to the realization of the equality of all the dharmas; in the Shingon it means the partial realization of the true aspect of the Pure Heart of Bodhi.[1]

Kambayashi explains the relations of Kukai's "Ten Stages of Spiritual Growth" (Ju-ju-shin in Japanese), "Six Muis" and

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[1] Tajima, op. cit., pp. 109-110.

"Three Kalpas" as follows:[1]

"Ten Stages"	"Six Muis"	"Three Kalpas"
(2) Gudo-jisai-shin (the thought of the adolescent)	Zen-mui (Sannirbhaya)	
(3) Eido-mui-shin (the thought of the child delivered from his terrors)		
(4) Yuiun-muga-shin (conscience of the aggregates devoid of self)	Shin-mui (Kayanirbhaya)	First Kalpa
(5) B atsugyo-inshu-shin (the thought of exterminating the seed and the causes of passion)	Muga-mui (Nairatmya-nirbhaya)	
(6) Taen-daijo-shin (the thought of the great vehicle for the salvation of others)	Ho-mui (Dharma-nirbhaya)	
(7) Kakushin-fusho-shin (the thought conscious of the negative)	Homuga-mui (Dharmanairatmya-nirbhaya)	Second Kalpa
(8) Ichido-mui-shin (the thought of one vehicle of salvation)	Issai-byodo-mui (Sarva-Dharmasamata-nirbhaya)	Third Kalpa
(9) Gokumu-jisho-shin (absolute thought of nature in itself)		

Above, in short, is the superstructure of the gigantic theological system formulated by Kukai. Following the "Ten Stages of Spiritual Growth," "Six Muis," and "Three Kalpas," one can ascend to the throne of great enlightenment with his mortal body. The Shingon teaching teaches us the way to open Buddha's wisdom in us, to enable us to acquire Buddha's power in us, and to develop Buddha's virtues in us. In a sense, the Shingon's soteriology reminds us of the Ekayana (one vehicle) of the Tendai school. Saicho,

[1]Kambayashi, Kobo-daishi no Shiso to Shukyo, p. 303.

in formulating his theological system, stayed within the framework of historic Mahayana doctrines. Therefore, Saicho felt that reason, represented in Taizokai, and wisdom, represented in Kongokai, are independent of each other, and that the truth is taught philosophically in the Lotus and religiously in esoteric practices. Saicho took pains to harmonize the Lotus, taught by the historical Buddha Sakyamuni, and Dainichikyo, taught by Buddha in Truth-body (Mahavairocana), and also to identify Sakyamuni and Mahavairocana. On the other hand, Kukai attempts to identify reason (Taizokai) and wisdom (Kongokai). Furthermore, he draws an almost arbitrary line of demarkation between exoteric teachings, including Hinayana and Mahayana, and esoteric teaching which is the Shingon doctrine. He accepts the Vajrayana doctrine of four bodies of Buddha on somewhat shaky scriptural grounds, but these four bodies are not taken too seriously. The only important doctrine in Kukai's system is Mahavairocana, who is the central deity and at the same time the metaphysical principle. Although Kukai insists that all the exoteric doctrines are preparation for esoteric doctrine, and as such they are part of the Shingon, he bypasses many of the important doctrines of historic Buddhism, both Hinayana and Mahayana. His cosmotheism is based on the doctrine that this world and human life have value and that this world is the world of mandala and manifests the virtues of Mahavairocana. Indeed, Mahayana affirms the temporal existence of the phenomenal world and that all beings are produced by the combination of all relations; thus, they have no fixed and unchangeable essence. Although superficially the Shingon appears to follow the historic Mahayana doctrine of Sunyata,

actually it attempts to transcend reality through wisdom; it is an attempt and affirmation of the permanence and absoluteness of the phenomenal world as the body of Mahavairocana. In connection with the general problems of Buddhist philosophy Takakusu states:

> Since the cycle of aeons [Kalpa] repeats itself in due course, a story of creation or the Creator does not exist in Buddhism. Practically speaking, Buddhism has no cosmology, no theology, no divinity. Brahma as a personal God in Buddhism is only a Being in the 'form-heaven' who comes and receives the Buddha's instruction. Thus a deification of the Buddhas, as some suppose, is out of the question.
>
> The universe, according to the Buddhist idea, is not homocentric. It is instead a co-creation of all beings. Moreover, everyone of us is self-created and self-creating. As long as all beings have common purposes, it is but natural that there be groups of similar types of beings. Buddhism does not believe in the doctrine that all have come out of one cause, but does hold that everything inevitably comes out of more than one cause; in other words, all is mutually relative, a product of interdependence.
>
> As to ontological questions, Buddhism rarely concerns itself, for 'thusness' or 'thatness' (tattva, reality), which refers chiefly to matter, is not what Buddhism seeks. The theory of no-substance (selflessness) which Buddhism holds will not permit any discussion about thing-in-themselves or real entity. . . .[1]

In all these points, the Shingon theological system should be accused of betraying what Takakusu feels is the general Buddhist philosophy. Masutani, in his article _Bukkyo ni okeru Kami no Mondai_ (the problem of deity in Buddhism), accepts the theistic trends within Buddhism which led to the doctrine of many Buddhas and _bodhisattvas_; yet, he feels that Buddhism did not and does not need gods, though it tolerates them on the practical level.[2] Anesaki seems to face the problem of the Buddhist doctrine

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[1]Takakusu, _op. cit._, pp. 192-193.

[2]Fumio Masutani, "Bukkyo ni okeru Kami no Mondai," _Kami no Mondai_, ed. by Hideo Kishimoto (Tokyo: Aoyama-shoin, 1948), pp. 117-149.

of deity more squarely. He follows the theistic trend of Buddhism, which Masutani accepts in his article, as a development of "Docetism." Anesaki develops his thesis in two ways: one, the way of mythical fancies about Buddha's superhuman qualities; the other, the way of metaphysical speculations on his personality as a _Tathagata_[1] and on his relations with the truth (_dharma_) which is revealed. Thus, he writes of the Shingon school:

> Though we know very little about the origin and history of Mantra Buddhism . . . it shows a most abtruse form of religion, being made up of extremely idealistic and materialistic elements. Its origin is ascribed to Nagarjuna, and it has certainly his all-identifying idealism at its basis; but at the same time mystic interpretations of the material as well as ideal worlds, as found in Vasubandhu, play a great part. . . .
>
> The Buddha, according to this philosophy, is nothing but the whole universe, the Dharma-dhatu, including its six elements--earth water, fire, air, space (or other), and consciousness. It is his real body, the Dharmakaya, and it may be divided into two complementary constituents, the mental and the material, or the ideal and the actual. The former is called the Garbha-kuksi, corresponding to the Tathagata-garbha of Asvaghosa; and the latter the Vajra-dhatu, the indestructible substance. The individualized phenomena are, in this way, nothing but the Buddha's revelation to himself, and at the same time the methods of benediction or 'holding up' (adhisthana) embracing all beings. The whole is called the Buddha Maha-Vairocana. The numberless manifestations of his body, such as Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Vajrapanis, Padmapanis . . . make up the whole pantheon of the religion, which is represented symbolically in the two sets of cycles or assemblages (mandala), corresponding to the above divisions of the Dhatu. . . . the historical Buddha dwindles almost to naught in . . . one corner of the Garbha-kuksi-mandala, but his actual personality means so little that these mystics have almost nothing to say of his life or teaching. . . . In short, the person of the Buddha is, with them, dispersed and diffused over the whole universe, and he ranked on the same level as any other superhuman beings. He is elevated on one side to the all-embracing Dharma-kaya, and on the other is degraded to mere dust.[2]

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[1]Masaharu Anesaki, _Katam Karaniyam_ (Tokyo: The Herald Press, Ltd., 1934), pp. 240-250.

[2]Masaharu Anesaki, "(Buddhist) Docetism," _Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics_, ed. James Hastings, Vol. IV (1911).

With all due respect to Takakusu, Masutani, and Anesaki, it may be argued that the Shingon theological system, including the doctrine of Mahavairocana and the soteriology of Sokushin-jobutsu, is one of the logical conclusions and live options of Mahayana Buddhism, which did not take the historic Buddha Sakyamuni very seriously. In all fairness, it must be pointed out that the Shingon system is more than Docetism; it is a positive theism. The special character of the Shingon is its preoccupation with Mahavairocana. In the Shingon system, Nirvana has to be identified with the truth of the cosmic enlightenment (bodhicitta), because the world is conceived as the wisdom and reason of Mahavairocana. In this sense, Buddhology and soteriology are one in the Shingon school, and this is one of the logical developments of Mahayanism.

> Buddhist philosophy started with the ideal of release from the miseries of life in conformity with the real nature of things (dhamma). As the reality, so the existence (yatha dhamma tatha satta). This yatha tatha has been revealed by the Tathagata, whose personality consisted in Yatha-vadi tathakari. This personality of Buddha is inseparable from the metaphysical entity of dhamma, and vice versa. The idea of the Tathagata has . . . become the pivot around which both philosophical speculations and religious faith have moved and developed.[1]

We see in Asvaghosa the identity of chitta (mind), which is "thatness" or essence, in the person of Buddha and in common men; this "thatness" (tathata) is the dharmakaya of Buddha, or the Tathagata-garbha, which is the womb and source from which every being derives its existence and activities.

> Asvaghosa's psychological cosmology did not decidedly deny the reality of the condescension body. Nevertheless, the idea of unity in the Trinity proceeded, in Vasubandhu and his

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[1]Anesaki, Katam Karaniyam, p. 250.

> followers, to that of identity (samata), verging on the negation of difference, as we have found in Nagarjuna. These docetists, however, did not go to the extreme of the latter's doctrine, but developed the Mahasanghikas' pantheism into their own theosophy. This theosophy is again worked up in the mysticism of the Mantra system.[1]

Although Vasubandhu believed in the future Buddha, called Maitreya, he opposed the view that only one Buddha appears in one world-period (kalpa). He saw the universe filled with all kinds of manifestations of Buddha, from gross matter, plants, and animals to the highest manifestations in the state of bliss. Thus, we can see how close Mahayana Buddhism developed to the tenets of Kukai, who went further and rejected the historic view of kalpa (world-periods) and attempted to view a monistic universe. Nirvana also was interpreted in terms of Sokushin-jobutsu (becoming Buddha in this very body). Kukai's theological superstructure, though far removed from historic Mahayana theology on the surface, is consistent within his own framework. It may be added in passing that the theological system of Kukai and Zen, two extremely different developments within Mahayana Buddhism, have more affinity in their world-view. Also, it is understandable how this type of world-view, coupled with all kinds of rituals and symbolisms, became the dominant religious force in Japan during the ninth century.

The Shingon School and Ryobu Shinto

We have noted earlier that there was a general trend toward esoteric belief and practice within Buddhism in Japan from the middle of the Nara period, and that magic and sorcery, inspired both by native Shinto and occult Taoism imported from China,

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[1] Ibid., p. 270.

were in vogue in the early Heian period. In fact, Buddhist esoterism in Japan faced a turning point toward the end of the Nara period, whether to become an independent school of its own or to remain as an integral part of other Buddhist schools. Buddhist esoterism in India infiltrated the Mahayana schools with vulgar beliefs and practices to the extent that Buddhism could no longer maintain its original character; the result, coupled with the awakening of Hinduism, was almost the complete disappearance of Buddhism from Indian soil.[1] Buddhist esoterism in China never attained the full status of a Tsung (sect or denomination); although highly revered in court circles under the leadership of Amoghavajra, the Chen-yen became the common property of all Buddhist schools. This fact does not mean that the Chen-yen disappeared completely in China; it mingled with Taoism and also stimulated the rise of secret societies. Nevertheless, with the exception of Lamaism, an esoteric school imported from Tibet, the Chen-yen never attained a status comparable to its sister church in Japan, the Shingon-shu.

Buddhist esoterism in Japan could have lost its Buddhist character had it not been for the two high-spirited leaders, Saicho (Dengyo-daishi) and Kukai (Kobo-daishi). To be sure, Buddhist esoterism allied with Shukendo or Mountain Priesthood (a mixture of Shinto, Taoist, and Buddhist belief and practice) after the death of Saicho and Kukai. Yet, Buddhist esotericism in Japan has lasted to this day as a full fledged Shu (school of denomination) with its own theology, Sangha (church), discipline and rule.

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[1]Kern, op. cit., p. 133.

In spite of Saicho's contribution to the cause of Buddhist esotericism in Japan, it was more or less a by-product from his own point of view. He regarded it an integral part of his understanding of religion, but only as a part of his whole system. On the other hand, Kukai dedicated his whole life to systematizing the Shingon theological system, formulating rituals and disciplines, and establishing the Shingon sangha. It is not an exaggeration to state that Buddhist esoterism in Japan was founded by and around Kukai's faith and personality.

Toneri Tanimoto in his Kobo Daishi, His Position in the History of Japanese Civilization discusses many facets of Kukai: (1) he was a linguist; he studied Chinese and Sanskrit systematically. The Japanese syllabry, called iroha, is said to have been originated by him. In a book published in the eighteenth century entitled Shittan-sanmitsu-sho it is recorded that Sanskrit was first introduced in Japan by Kukai, and among his various works there remains a book concerning Sanskrit language, Shittan-jibo-narabini-shakugi. (2) Kukai was a man of letters and a poet. He was not only proficient in Chinese literature but also was a pioneer of the rhetoric of the Japanese language. One of his works, Bunkyo-hifuron was the first work in Japan which dealt with Chinese rhetoric. (3) He was an expert in the fine arts. The Buddhist painting which had been introduced before Kukai's time was called the northern branch. Kukai and Saicho introduced the southern branch painting. Kukai is also said to have carved the statue of Akshobhya which is preserved at Toji temple to this day, and he is credited with the introduction of ikwei or "fixed pattern" for

sculpture. (4) Kukai's penmanship won him fame both in China and Japan. (5) As a religious leader, he propagated esoteric Buddhism and systematized Ryobu-Shinto (amalgamation of Buddhism and Shinto). (6) As a philosopher, he formulated the Shingon world-view. (7) Kukai was also an educationist, initiating liberal education in addition to solely religious education. (8) He exercised leadership in practical matters, including charity and other social institutions. (9) He is still remembered among the masses as a miracle worker.[1]

As mentioned earlier, the Shingon school had the potentiality of developing into a secret society cutting across denominational and religious lines. But Kukai's dynamic personality and vivid religious experience, coupled with social and historical factors, stimulated the formation of a fully fledged Shingon Sangha. In the history of Buddhist esoterism, the only other branch which became an independent school was Lamaism in Tibet.[2] The similarities between Lamaism, generally known as Western Esoterism, and the Shingon school, generally known as Eastern Esoterism, should not be minimized, though in all fairness it may be said that the Shingon is freer from vulgar beliefs and practices which dominate Lamaism.

According to his Go-yuikoku, Kukai anticipated a gradual but steady growth of the Shingon school as the national religion. In the second will he carefully instructed that Jitsuye be the

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[1]Toneri Tanimoto, Kobo Daishi, His Position in the History of Japanese Civilization (Kobe: The Japan Chronicle Office, 1907).

[2]Waddel, op. cit.; Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism. III, 345-401.

senior daitoku (corresponds to the Episcopate used both by the Chen-yen school and Nestorian Christianity in China) in charge of Sutras. "If anything should happen to Jitsuye, let Shinga (Kukai's own brother) be in charge of the responsibility."[1] He delegated authority among his close brotherhood of disciples. Thus, in the third will he instructed Shinga to administer Gufukuji, the temple which had been given to Kukai as a resting place on his journey between Kyoto and Mount Koya. In the same will he gave the qualification for the abbotship of Toji temple as "not seniority but spiritual achievement and the experience of having ministered to the faithful." In the fifth will, he designated the Toji temple at Kyoto as Kyo-O-Gokoku no Tera or "Temple for the protection of the Nation." In the sixth will, he referred to the Ordination Hall, which was under construction at the Toji temple, and commanded Jitsuye to consecrate it on his behalf. The ninth will is concerned with the instruction of future priests. In the tenth will, he designated the abbot of the Toji temple as zasu of Toji: "Harmony was the keynote at Ch'in-lung Temple at Ch'ang-an, China, where several thousands monks resided. Even when our family [the Shingon school] number millions, maintain harmony and do not let any single member transfer to other schools."[2]

In the twelfth will, Kukai said: "Everything has two aspects, exoteric and esoteric. Our disciples should hold mitsu (esoterism) within and ken (exoterism) without." A Shingon follower was especially urged to study the Sanron and Hosso doctrines.

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[1]Yamamoto, Kobo-daishi, pp. 472-473.

[2]Ibid., pp. 473-478.

Kukai gave specific instructions concerning Mishiho or votive service held in the court chapel (the fourteenth will) and financial advice (the fifteenth will). The novitiate was discussed (the sixteenth will), and there were rules of the sangha prohibiting games of chess (the seventeenth will), women in the priests' quarters (the eighteenth will), and intoxicating drinks (the nineteenth will). The other wills (from the twenty-first to the twenty-fifth) were instructions concerning the transmission of the secrets of the Shingon.[1]

The Shingon school, which grew out of the new religious experience of Kukai, soon became a highly stratified ecclesiastical organization following the familiar pattern of the development of a new religion.[2] Its great temples--Toji, Daigoji, and Ninnaji--became the centers of sectarian groups within the Shingon sangha. Although they had much in common, the Omuro sect differed slightly from the others in theology. Later, another sect called Shingi-shingon was started by Kakuhan in 1130, and two sub-sects, Chizan and Buzan, rose from the Shingi-shingon school. These and other minor schools within the Shingon fellowship show differences in theological interpretation, rituals, and disciplines. Nevertheless, all of them have accepted Kukai's Go-yuikoku as the guiding principle on practical and ecclesiastical matters to this day.

But the Shingon sangha, in order to maintain its organizational forms, needed the integrating force of worship. The function of worship in religion is well stated in the following:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 479-492.

[2] Wach, op. cit., pp. 130-173.

> What is formulated in the theoretical statement of faith is done in religiously inspired acts. In a wider sense, all actions which flow from and are determined by religious experience are to be regarded as practical expression or cultus. In a narrower sense, however, we call cultus the act or acts of the homo religious: worship . . . Underhill . . . divides these acts into (1) ritual (liturgical pattern), (2) symbols (images), (3) sacraments (visible things and deeds), and (4) sacrifice. . . .[1]

One of the characteristics of the Shingon school was its rich symbols and rituals. Unlike Buddhist esoteric schools in China and Tibet, the Shingon worship was grounded in Kukai's theological system. Although the Shingon was not free from the invasion of vulgar beliefs and practices, it maintained its theological basis that all the manifestations emanating from Mahavairocana could be evoked by acts of worship. At the same time, Kukai was preoccupied with the monistic wholeness of the total universe at the expense of the consideration of the ethical character of its ultimate reality, and the Shingon worship reflects this tenet. Thus, Anesaki writes:

> A further illustration of this relationship between unity and diversity is to be found in the Shingon concept of worship. Inside the larger circle enclosed by the central square of the Diamond Cycle there are four figures symmetrically disposed about the group of five smaller circles and representing respectively the Play, the Garland, the Song, and the Dance. In addition to these there is an isolated figure in each of the four angels of the inner border, representing the Incense, the Flower, the Lamp and the Perfume. All are known as indestructible Entities and are associated with appropriate symbols. They are intended to signify the acts of worship and adoration paid to the Great Illuminator, of whom, however, they are manifestations; or in other words, the Great Illuminator, the cosmic coul, adores himself by these various emanations of his own spiritual powers, while they, the manifested Indestructibles, worship by their respective acts the real spiritual entity and source of all emanations. There is here represented the distinction between the worshipped and the worshippers, but it is at the same time implied that the two are not separate

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[1] Ibid., p. 25.

entities, but, in reality, a unit. Thus the probable representation of the acts of worship symbolizes the truth that worship or adoration is based on the spiritual ties which unite the worshippers with the worshipped. He who adores the Divinity which is consummation of his ideals and the source of inspiration and consolation, is realizing the spirit of that Divinity in his own soul, because his own soul is in communion with, and inspired by, the Divinity. This is the Shingon theory of worship presented as a corollary to its theory of the relation between unity and diversity, and the same idea is repeated in another square. . . .

In the practical representation of this theory it is important to notice that all the acts of worship are illustrated by what is beautiful, whether in color or in form, in rhythm, in odor, in style or in expression. The Play is the beauty of manner and posture; the Garland, of form and composition; the Song, of word and metre; the Dance, of movement and rhythm; the Flower, of color and fragrance; the Lamp, of light and warmth . . . these symbolic figures typify the fundamental qualities of all branches of the fine arts and are summed up in the emblematic lotus flower. Their title, "Indestructible," may therefore be paraphrased by the term "Prototype," because they represent the ideal elements of art in mind of the Great Illuminator . . . in a word, the worship of Divinity should not and cannot be dissociated from the cult of beauty, and art, therefore, must be an integral part of religion.[1]

De Visser writes about the elaborate festival of Ten Thousand Lamps and Flowers, offered as a thanksgiving for the "Four Favours" (Shi-on no Mando Manke no e) in Kongobuji on Koyasan, celebrated by Kukai in 832.[2] Kukai was instrumental in arranging rituals to meet different needs, including the Sandan no Mishiho[3] (August ceremonies of the three altars) for the new emperor and Bodhisattva-silla for lay disciples (the ceremony of taking the Bodhisattva's precepts).[4] He offered votive services for drought, rebellion and sickness, as well as for the protection of the throne. During thirty years of work after his return from China, Kukai cap-

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[1]Anesaki, Buddhist Art, pp. 41-42.

[2]De Visser, op. cit., I, 241-243. [3]Ibid., p. 392.

[4]Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "Ceremonies for Lay Disciples at Koya-san," The Eastern Buddhist, VI (1932), 157-175.

tivated the nobles and the masses by promising to fulfil any ideal or desire, low or high, near or distant, through the Shingon mysteries and sacraments. Shoken Akizuki describes Kukai's formula Anjin to pacify one's mind:

> According to the theory of knowledge, our worlds as constructed by the mind are varied according to the different mental standpoints. "The three worlds are one mind, nothing besides Mind."
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> Entering the religious life points out to us the right direction. . . . Now this state to which our mind is changed is called in Shingon getting Anjin which is fixing the mind on real truth. . . . The important points in Shingon are: believing in the truth of oneness, the endeavour to improve in speaking, acting, and thinking as near like the Buddha as possible, and to have the attainment to Buddhahood for our ideal. . . .
>
> According to Shingon, not only the mind but the body has the virtues of the Buddha and so all the mystic faculties can be cultivated in both. Kobo Daishi said in his Hiken, "The truth of Buddha is not far away from us but very near, for it exists in our minds and as Bhutatathata does not exist outside of us. How can we attain it by giving up our bodies? Enlightenment and unenlightenment belong to us, so we can attain to Buddhahood at once when we get the religious mind. Ignorance and enlightenment, darkness and light do not exist outside of us. So we can realize the highest truth at once if we believe in it and practise it."[1]

Kukai is said to have brought back from China minute instructions for Abhiseka (initiation service), which was originally composed by Subhakarasinha. Theoretically, there are three forms: (1) the mudra-abhiseka (initiation of signs), constituted chiefly of finger-twinings, is a curtailed form of initiation conferred on an earnest believer who is short of means; (2) the Chitta-abhiseka (initiation of mind), which is beyond the scope of speech and action, is given only to a holy person; (3) the karma-abhiseka (initiation of actions) is the ordinary rite which an acharya per-

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[1]Shoken Akizuki, "Anjin in Shingon," The Eastern Buddhist, V (1931), 314-317.

forms for a fully equipped pupil. The karma-abhiseka is divided into the abhiseka for performing a sacred connection (pratity-abandha-abhiseka), the abhiseka for holding a magical power (vidyadhara-abhiseka), and the abhiseka for transmitting the law (dharmasamchara-abhiseka).[1] During his lifetime, Kukai performed abhisekas for all kinds of people, including emperors, court nobles, Shinto priests, other Buddhist priests, and humble folks.

Kukai's ingenuity and zeal gradually overpowered Saicho's influence, and many of the Tendai priests found it more useful to emphasize the mystic side of Saicho's teaching. Conspicuous among them was Ennin, generally known as Jikaku, who was appointed abbot of the Tendai in 854 and who had a special sympathy for the Shingon. Ennin and others at Mount Hiei borrowed much from the Shingon, thus obliterating many of the differences between the Tendai and Shingon. Thus, Japanese Buddhism from the ninth through the twelfth century onward was chiefly under the influence of esoterism. During this period the growing centralization of government and the two centers of esoteric Buddhism--the Tendai and Shingon--helped each other in their development. Buddhist ceremonies became the order of the day in court. With the growing stratification of the sangha, higher clergy became dignified nobles, exercising their influence on affairs political and military. The high ideals of the two leaders, Saicho and Kukai, in the course of time resulted in establishing two schools of eudaemonistic esoterism, both claiming to be the national religion. Anesaki summarizes the effects

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[1] Junjiro Takakusu, "Initiation (Buddhist)," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, Vol. VII (1915).

of the Shingon school:

> First, the rule of the priests and the organization of a hierarchy, a necessary consequence of sacramentalism; this needs little explanation. Second, the corruption of the hierarchy through association with the degenerate aristocracy whose patronage made the religion a formidable power as well as their tool. This implies a sway of sentimentalism and loss of moral vigor, which led to a social revolution and religious reformation. Third, an assimilation of popular superstition and occult practices, including Japanese Shinto and Chinese Taoism, and the formation of eclectic Buddhism, of which the "Double Aspect" Shinto was a phrase. Fourth, the elaboration of iconography and symbolism which stimulated a subtle aesthetic sense but was destined to degenerate into a mere aestheticism, indulgence in formal beauty.[1]

As discussed earlier, Saicho and Kukai formulated different theological systems. Moreover, they approached the practical question of Buddhist esoterism differently. Saicho viewed esoterism as one kind of Mahayana Buddhism, which he attempted to incorporate into his gigantic syncretistic Tendai system. Although he was strongly attracted by esoterism, he never lost sight of the other elements, such as the Lotus, the Vinaya, and the Zen: Saicho even found room for Shinto. But all these elements had to be integrated under the Lotus doctrine. In other words, his difficulty was how to maintain a balance of different systems under the roof of the Tendai and conditioned by its theological boundary. At the same time his greatness was the way he lived with these tensions, both theological and practical. In China Saicho rightly observed that the Chen-yen was not an independent Tsung, and he maintained this view throughout his life. What Saicho attempted was the establishment of a national religion based on the Lotus doctrine, and he denounced the exclusiveness of the old established schools at Nara.

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[1]Anesaki, Katam Karaniyam, p. 89.

He fought to set up a Tendai ordination hall at Mount Hiei, which was to be the headquarters of the national religion and the center of monastic education. In so doing, he indirectly aided the trend toward an independent esoteric Buddhism.

Kukai, on the other hand, regarded esoterism as the highest and truest Buddhism. He too was syncretistic in temperament, but his system was an attempt to incorporate all religious values into the superstructure of the Shingon system; all other teachings except the Shingon doctrine were exoteric and preparatory to esoterism. Unlike Saicho, Kukai was not conditioned by any historic framework, and he proceeded to formulate his own theological system. In Kukai's encyclopedic theological system, every religious system found room and he did not see the need of denouncing the old established schools of Nara. Rather, he ingratiated himself with the leaders of other Buddhist schools, because he felt they were all on their way to the Bodhi. His mission was to enlighten the followers of other schools, which taught partial truths. It was a mission from within, as it were. With this view, he maintained his rapport with the old established schools as well as with the Tendai school. The practical necessity of training leadership to carry on his mission led him to establish the Shingon monastery at Mount Koya. But he continued to perform abhiseka (initiation) for the followers of other schools. Inevitably, however, Kukai's ministry culminated in the formation of the Shingon-shu toward the end of his life.

Concerning the question of Shinto, Saicho was tolerant; he made every effort to incorporate Shinto belief and practice in-

to the Tendai system. No doubt it was a practical necessity which led Saicho to respect the Shinto deity who was regarded as the King of the Mountain (Sanno in Japanese). But it is noteworthy that Saicho's successors at Mount Hiei took a far more positive attitude toward Shinto after the Tendai came under strong influence of the Shingon Buddhism. On the other hand, Kukai actively solicited the amalgamation of Shingon Buddhism and Shinto.

> It is said that the name of Ryobu-Shinto was given to the doctrines of Kobo Daishi by his admirer the Emperor Saga (810-823). It is clear that the teaching of the Shingon sect was particularly well adapted to theories of amalgamation, for it began by stating that the whole Universe is a manifestation of the Buddha, and starting from such a premise it was easy with a little good will to identify deities who represent natural features and forces (as most Shinto deities undoubtedly do) with roughly similar manifestations of the Buddha. The process was further facilitated by the singular vagueness of Shinto deities and the legends concerning them. Any tendency towards monotheism, to imagine a being resembling Jehovah or Allah, was conspicuously absent. The gods were not represented by Statues or pictures or by any form, and few of the stories told about them give them any definite characteristics. There was no objection to identifying them with anything which was majestic and benevolent.
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> Nevertheless, the process of identification was gradual: it was complete in the Kamakura period when we find, for instance, that the Shinto deity Hachiman is accepted as a Buddha . . . or as a Bodhisattva, the use of both terms being a significant reminder that we are not in the realm of strict Buddhist orthodoxy. Yet it would seem that in their undoubted works Dengyo Daishi and Kobo Daishi use the older language which describes Shinto deities as guardians or protectors of the faith. When the complete fusion of Buddhas and Shinto deities is spoken of in later times the phrase Honji Suijaku meaning "home land and footprints" is often used. It appears to have been originally employed of the Lotus-sutra. . . . But subsequently it was used in a much more extended sense to signify the true nature of any Buddha and his appearance in Japan as incarnate or manifested in a Shinto deity.
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> The process of amalgamation was probably favoured by the rise of a hermit section in both the Shingon and Tendai, known as Yamabushi, those who sleep on mountains, or Shugenja. . . . In the former the celebrated priest named Shobo (or Rigen Daishi), who flourished 832-909, founded associations called Shugendo, and his example was followed in the Tendai by Zoyo about a century later (1090). The members of these confraternities frequented the wild mountains and peaks of Yamato. . . . Yamato was one of the holy lands of Shinto: its high places and forests were all under the protection of Shinto deities and now Buddhist pilgrims and hermits made them their

haunt. . . . Mount Omine came to be regarded as very body of the Buddha Vairocana and the smaller peaks were similarly identified with other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The three temples of Kumano in Kii are a striking example of Ryobu-Shinto in its fully developed form.

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Nor did the movement towards assimilation and amalgamation come only from the Buddhist side. The Shinto priests were not in the habit of defining their dogmas, or the nature of their gods, but the number of applications made for permission to build Buddhist temples within the precincts of Shinto shrines is in itself a proof that they considered such union as desirable . . . since in the Nara and Heian periods the whole weight of the official and educated world . . . was on the Buddhist side and Buddhism was long considered as another name for civilization and progress, it was pretty clear that Shinto had all to gain and very little to lose in responding to the advances made by antagonists who would have been powerful and probably irresistible if things had been allowed to come to an open rupture.[1]

The most conspicuous leader in this movement to "amalgamate" Buddhism and Shinto was Kukai. In many ways, Kukai regarded Gyogi (667-748) as his spiritual father. Gyogi is usually called Bosatsu (Bodhisattva) because Bodhisena took him to be Manjusri himself. It was Gyogi who initiated a syncretistic Buddhist movement, and Kukai systematized it.[2] Kukai and a Shinto Priest, Nakatomi Harai, wrote Ryobu-sho (Theory of Two Parts) in 813, and Kukai developed it further as the theory of Ryobu-Shinto in 822. In 823, Kukai and Emperor Saga received Shinto abhiseka. Kukai, following the example of Saicho, venerated the Shinto deities of Mount Koya, Nifuzu-hime, and Koya-daimyojin, and he also wrote his devotion to the shrine of the Sun-goddess of Ise. To be sure, he was conscious of the expediency of such an amalgamation, yet his Buddhology, which was not conditioned by the historic Buddha Sakya-

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[1]Eliot, Japanese Buddhism, pp. 241-243.

[2]K. Ashida, "Japan," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, Vol. VII (1914).

muni, found it logical to identify the primordial native deity (Amaterasu, the Sun-goddess) and the primordial Mahavairocana. Historically, however, Ryobu-Shinto was never a complete merger of the two organizations.

> Shinto accepted Buddhism by adding to its pantheon the foreign deities from China and India. Buddhism, however, approached the matter from a different angle. It declared that Shinto deities were derivative manifestations of the Buddhist deities which were regarded as original entities. The boundaries in this fusion became more and more obliterated. Buddhist priests took charge of Shinto sanctuaries, and Shinto priests began to play only minor parts in the ceremonies. With the ascendancy of Buddhism, Shinto ceased to occupy a position of prominence. Shrines were largely the property of families who, with the approval of the government, placed members trained for the Buddhist priesthood in charge of them. Worshippers were almost unable to make a distinction between the two religions. Indeed, the Buddhist influence became so strong that the form of Shinto rituals and celebrations, the decorative effects in the shrines, and even the images of the native deities took on a decidedly Buddhist flavor. However, the amalgamation was never complete. There developed a division of duties; Shinto deities presided over the affairs of this world while the life hereafter became the concern of Buddhism. Birth, marriages, seasonal festivals, and victories in battle were in the sphere of Shinto interest. Preaching doctrinal matters, ecclesiastical organization, and funerals were the responsibility of Buddhism. Ancestor worship, however, which under strong Confucian influence had become a universal practice, was the affair of both. Through exorcism and divination, some Shinto shrines entered the field of teaching and doctrine, but Shinto was definitely subordinated to the Buddhist hierarchy.[1]

The unique character of the Shingon-shu should be seen in its proper perspective. First, it was not free from the historic experience of Japan, religious or otherwise. The ethos of Shinto belief and practice, though influenced by Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism, persisted among the masses. The throne was protected and supported by Shinto belief. Then came Taoism, especially occult Taoism which soon found affinity with the Shinto superstitions

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[1]Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Civil Information and Education Section, Religions in Japan, (Tokyo, 1948) p. 9.

among the peasantry and which later infiltrated other social circles. Confucianism, the symbol of Chinese learning, influenced the court and educated classes and provided ethical values. Buddhism coming as it did first through the Korean peninsula and later directly from China, encountered difficulties before it penetrated Japanese soil. The six Buddhist schools of the Nara period were still regarded as religions of China, though the Buddhist hierarchy was closely identified with the court and nobility. With very few exceptions, the intellectual leadership of Buddhism remained in the Chinese and Korean missionaries until the middle of the Nara period. This reflected the trend in social and cultural factors, where, by and large the attempt was to imitate everything Chinese. And, as we found in China during some periods, the Nara court was overburdened with ecclesiastical superstructure.

Although political and social stability did not improve noticeably, the removal of the capital from Nara to Kyoto reflects a turning point in the history of Japan. A great change was seen in the development of Buddhism. The two leaders, Saicho and Kukai, were ardent admirers of T'ang China, though they no longer depended solely on Chinese leadership. Their attempt was largely that of synthesis, not only a synthetic Buddhist doctrine but a formulation of a synthetic national religion, including Shinto, Taoist, and Confucianist values. Both Saicho and Kukai were learned in theological and philosophical literature written in Chinese, but they both attempted to formulate their doctrinal treatises in the Japanese language. Because of their own religious heritage in

Japan, their understanding of Buddhism was syncretistic.

Second, we should appreciate the historic heritage of the Shingon school itself. The so-called Mantra element may be traced to the early history of Buddhism and even to pre-Buddhist Hindu history; it crystalized very slowly and gradually. In spite of the fact that Nalanda University was the center of Mahayanistic esoterism, it taught other Mahayana doctrines and practices as well. Mahayana esoterism never attained the prestige in India which the Chen-yen achieved in the Chinese court. Buddhist esoterism was transplanted to China by way of Central Asia where it had come in contact with non-Buddhist religions. Moreover, it was favored in the Chinese capital, Ch'ang-an, where various religions were tolerated. Under the able leadership of Amoghavajra, the Chen-yen became the state religion for all practical purposes. Although it lost much of the historic Buddhist theology, the Chen-yen world-view, grounded in the Yogacara theory of knowledge and expressed in rituals and mandalas, met the needs of people in various classes and places. Kukai found a very useful and satisfying religion at his disposal. His task, as he envisaged it, was to enlighten his countrymen with this Gospel.

Third, the personality and training of Kukai uniquely qualified him for his task of establishing a syncretistic national religion. Well versed in Confucian and Taoist literature and practice, reared in a minor noble family closely related to Shinto, he was trained to become a government official. Dissatisfied with this prospect, he sought religious training. His whole life reflected the Japan of his age, and his search for truth was con-

ditioned by his own religious heritage. Although he studied abroad, he was not satisfied with the mere translation of what he learned in China. But in "integrating" what he learned as the truth of Buddhism, Kukai's theological system reflected the Japanese world-view. His religious system incorporated many of the truth values handed down by Mantra Buddhism, and yet the whole system was peculiarly indigenous. He attempted to find room for Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto, and to a great extent he succeeded in this synthesis. Yet the overall effect of his religious system is peculiarly Buddhistic. Viewed from the history of Buddhist esoterism, Kukai's esoteric system is different from the Indian Mantrayana, the Chinese Chen-yen, and the Tibetan Lamaism; it was grounded in the lofty Yogacara doctrinal tradition.

Much of the Shingon doctrine has not been made public. But judging from what we are able to gather, Kukai's understanding of religion may be summarized in one word--"Cosmotheism." He developed a lofty theological superstructure, but in the final analysis he did not define important theological and philosophical concepts. In his encyclopedic system are found roots of different religious attitudes. Yet the almost undefinable synthetic "wholeness" of Kukai's understanding of religion conditioned the subsequent development of religion in Japan.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The main task of this study was an examination of the life and teaching of Kobo-daishi (Kukai), who founded Shingon (Mantra) Buddhism in Japan in the ninth century. In order to appreciate the place of Kobo-daishi and Shingon Buddhism, we summarized (1) the historical development of religions in Japan prior to the time of Kobo-daishi and (2) the historical development of Mantra Buddhism (Mantrayana) in India, China, and Japan.

Our implicit assumption was that behind the native cult of Shinto was a world-view which was uniquely "Japanese." The lack of materials makes it difficult to reconstruct such a world-view, but we attempted to formulate a hypothesis and examine it in the light of the historical development of religions and culture in Japan. We claim no originality in this respect, and our hypothesis was only partially examined; further study of the development of religions in Japan will clarify our tentative thesis.

The ancient Hindu world-view has been characterized as chiefly concerned with the metaphysical qualitative equation of Brahman and Atman, and the Chinese world-view as chiefly concerned with the ethical harmony of the universe, and our hypothesis was that the ancient Japanese were chiefly preoccupied with the aesthetic total experience of the cosmic wholeness. To be sure, the

ancient Japanese experienced suffering, joy, awe, frustration, and aspiration. But all in all, to them the universe as a whole was "beautiful." Their aesthetic preoccupation hindered the nurture of metaphysical or ethical sensitivities until they were exposed to foreign cultures. One might say that "wholeness" was a basic category to the ancient Japanese, who, consequently, did not develop a strong analytical sensitivity. And the basic character of this cosmic wholeness was "beauty." It is our opinion that early Shinto reflected this world-view of the ancient Japanese.

The subsequent history of religions in Japan were examined in the light of this world-view. Though the Japanese world-view became more sophisticated under the influence of the foreign religious schools which were introduced to Japan, it is our contention that the Japanese world-view remained fairly constant in its basic character until the modern period.

Before the introduction of Chinese culture, the Japanese made no distinction between religious cult (matsuri) and civil government affairs (matsuri-goto). They felt little difference between celestial and earthly spheres. Kami (often translated as gods) was not the ultimate reality; in a naive way, the whole universe as a whole was the ultimate reality. This was expressed in early Japanese social life, which was based on the dozoku system. Dozoku did not necessarily refer to blood relations exclusively, though many actually were. Some members of one dozoku were related by marriage to members of another dozoku, but this relationship was secondary to the relationship of dozoku. The communal cohesion of the dozoku was maintained by: (1) a paternal com-

munity organization with the main family as the center; (2) residence in the same locality; (3) claiming the same uji-gami or deity. Both religious and political leadership were in the hands of the members of the main family. Between the first and the third centuries, there developed in the present Nara prefecture a confederation called the Yamato kingdom of many dozoku around one leading family. The structure of the Yamato kingdom followed the pattern of the dozoku system. The term Shinto signifies not only the religious and cultic aspects but the "way of the Yamato kingdom."

The Yamato kingdom in the course of time extended its influence to the southern tip of the Korean peninsula where it came in contact with Chinese culture. Chinese culture and bureaucratic political structure made a great impact on the Japanese. Although they were attracted by Chinese culture, especially political ethics which had not been articulated in Japan, the Japanese tried to interpret Chinese culture with their own world-view. Thus, they tried to "domesticate" Chinese bureaucratic political ethics and make it workable in the old dozoku (clan) system. The result was that Chinese culture was "watered down" to fit into the Japanese social structure, but at the same time the old Japanese world-view was influenced by the Chinese world-view. Thus, the distinction between "heaven" and "earth" and between yang (male) and yin (female) were first articulated in Japan through Chinese concepts. Consequently, the position of kami was elevated, and relations between ruler and ruled were defined in political and ethical terms. The Japanese became more conscious of the "virtues" of filial

piety and ancestor worship, and the early Shinto belief of taboo concerning the leading family became a concept of "loyalty to the imperial family." This does not mean, however, that the Yamato kingdom was completely "China-ized." The clan chieftains retained their political power, and Shinto developed as a national cult.

One of the chief contributions of Chinese culture was to prepare the way for the introduction of Buddhism to Japan. The major Mahayana Buddhist schools were introduced before the eighth century. Although Buddhism had been greatly modified in China, it had retained the metaphysical concern of the original Hindu world-view. In comparison with Confucianism, which was oriented more towards human society in actual practice, Buddhism asked the question of the ultimate reality (nirvana). In Mahayana Buddhism, a historic person (Sakyamuni) became dharmakaya (truth-body or "logos"), the symbol of nirvana. In Japan, Buddha Sakyamuni had to compete with Shinto kami, who by this time had been elevated in the Japanese pantheon. How to reconcile Buddha and kami, especially the Sun-Goddess, became the chief religious problem in Japan.

The penetration of Buddhism coincided with the inner disintegration of the Japanese social and cultrual structure. Under the leadership of Prince Shotoku (574-622) Buddhism became recognized as a vehicle of the superior culture of China, and it was also under his leadership that the Yamato kingdom began to develop into a new bureaucratic state modelled after China. The Seventeen Articles promulgated by Prince Shotoku was a curious admixture of concepts based on Shinto, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and the

Yin-yang system.

Prince Shotoku's reform program was actualized during the Taika-Taiho period (645-718) after the decline of the Soga clan. Thus, the Yamato kingdom became a bureaucratic state with the imperial family as its center. It is to be noted, however, that the Fujiwara family began to exercise power behind the throne, and this family became more influential throughout the Nara and Heian periods. Buddhism prospered as an instrument of civilization and political unification. Also, the shuken-do (Mountain Priesthood), a mixture of Buddhism, Taoism, and Shinto, came into being during the Taika-Taiho period. Buddhist temples and monasteries in the course of time adjusted to the Japanese situation, and a close relationship between Shinto and Buddhism developed. Toward the middle of the Nara period, Buddhist institutions acquired wealth and power and became a menace to the government.

During the Nara period (707-781), the clan chieftains enjoyed the benefits of a T'ang type of administration system, yet retained its ancient rights. The Yamato bureaucracy began to collapse. When the prestige of the central government declined, some of the clan chieftains--a residue of the ancient dozoku structure--developed into a new class of court nobles. These court nobles sought a new type of religion which was more congenial to their political aspirations. Although most of the court nobles had become Buddhists, their implicit world-view was more akin to the ancient Japanese world-view expressed in Shinto. And the type of Buddhism most congenial to Shinto was Mikkyo (Mantra) Buddhism of the Shingon school. But before Kobo-daishi could establish

Shingon Buddhism as an independent school, a new religious movement was started by Dengyo-daishi (767-822), the founder of the Tendai school in Japan.

Dengyo-daishi's theological system was an adaptation of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai system, formulated by Chi-i (531-597), to the Japanese situation. The pantheistic tenet of the T'ien-t'ai school was in a way a return to pre-Buddhist Hindu metaphysics. It recognized buddha-tathata (absolute nature of Buddha) in all beings. The T'ien-t'ai school was an attempt to save the world of appearance, which Buddhism in India tended to deny. All things are void and relative because they depend on causes; but because they are produced they enjoy relative existence. This theological system was congenial to Dengyo-daishi, who was seeking a syncretistic religion. He was attracted by Mikkyo (esoteric Buddhism) which he attempted to incorporate into his gigantic syncretistic Tendai system. Other doctrines, such as the Vinaya, the Zen, and Shinto, were also included in the theological system of Dengyo-daishi. But the focal point in the Japanese Tendai school was the Lotus doctrine as interpreted by Chi-i. It may be said that Dengyo-daishi followed the T'ien-t'ai system philosophically and Mikkyo (Mantra) practice religiously. Although he venerated Mahavairocana of Mantra Buddhism, he did not lose sight of the historic Buddha Sakyamuni. Thus, Dengyo-daishi lived with these tensions.

The importance of Dengyo-daishi in the history of Buddhism and in the history of religions in Japan cannot be minimized. First, he established the Mahayana abhiseka (ordination) at Mount Hiei. Before he established a Mahayana ordination hall,[1] a com-

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[1]The ordination hall (kaidan) was not officially recog-

bined Hinayana-Mahayana ordination was the rule in Japan as in China. In a sense, Tendai Buddhism in Japan was an extreme Mahayana movement. Second, he divorced the Tendai school from the six established Buddhist schools of the Nara period. Dengyo-daishi felt that a new religious movement needed a new geographical center away from the old capital of Nara. Therefore, he established an ordination hall and monastic school at Mount Hiei. Third, he thought of the Tendai school not only as a united Buddhist church but as the national religion of Japan. He was a true follower of Chi-i, the real formulator of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai system. However, he was not satisfied with mere translation of the Chinese T'ien-t'ai system, but he attempted to interpret it for his age and for the Japanese. Although he did not systematize Sanno Ichijitsu Shinto (identification of Buddhism and Shinto) theologically, he included Shinto in his new national religion. The theological formulation of the pattern of coexistence of Shinto and Buddhism was more clearly formulated by Kobo-daishi, the founder of Shingon Buddhism in Japan.

Buddhism is commonly divided into the Hinayana and Mahayana schools. In this thesis, we formulated a third branch--Mantrayana or Mantra (Shingon) Buddhism. Mantrayana was traced to the early period of Buddhism when some of the pre-Buddhistic Hindu elements, including mantras and dharanis, were accepted. Buddhist esoterism (Mantrayana) had two centers--Nalanda and Vikramasilas. From the former developed a Mahayanistic esoterism and from the latter left-hand (vulgar) esoterism. The Japanese Shingon school is a spiritual heir of Mahayanistic esoterism. The

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nized by the government until after Dengyo-daishi's death.

central concept of Buddhism--nirvana--was interpreted by the Madhyamika school as sunya (void or relative). The Yogacara school, while retaining the term sunya, interpreted it more positively in terms of chitta-dharmata (spiritual absolute). According to this school, the absolute becomes immanent in the phenomenal world. This Yogacara interpretation was adopted by Mantrayana which interpreted the absolute in terms of vajra (firm, unchangeable, inpenetrable). In the meantime, Mantrayana shortened sutras to dharanis and mantras. Mantrayana was gradually introduced to China by way of Central Asia where it had encountered non-Buddhist religions, including Manichaeism and Nestorianism. The chief advocator of Mantra Buddhism in China was Amoghavajra (705-774) who was greatly respected in the court of T'ang shortly before Kobo-daishi visited the capital of T'ang China. The Mantra School (Chen-yen in Chinese and Shingon in Japanese), with all its dharanis, mandalas, and rituals, was based on a simple cosmotheism as expressed in various sutras, chiefly in the Mahavairocana-sutra (Dainichikyo) and Vajrasekhara-sutra (Kongochokyo). According to this school, the cosmos itself was dharmakaya (truth-body) metaphysically speaking, and was Buddha Mahavairocana religiously speaking.

Kobo-daishi or Kukai (774-835) aspired to be a government official and was educated in Confucianism. His spiritual struggle brought him in contact with Taoism, Shinto, and Buddhism, and at one time he joined the Mountain Priesthood (shuken-do). Kukai's attempt at harmonizing "reason" and "faith" was solved, at least to his own satisfaction, when he discovered the Mahavairocana-

sutra. He had three criteria of truth--(1) shogu or shotoku (intuitive reason), (2) shutoku (acquired reason), and (3) shinko (authority of faith given by the witness of Buddha). According to him, once the acquired reason is enlightened by the authority of faith, it becomes the enlightened reason which leads the devotee to the mystery of the Shingon (true word). The Sangoshiki, Kukai's earliest writings on Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, indicates that he was receptive to truth values of other religious systems and that he was convinced that ultimate truth must be a fundamental unity of all religions. His later work, the Benkemmitsu-nikyoron (Treatise on Two Teachings--Revealed and Unreavealed), claims that all the teachings preached by a manifested Buddha (Sakyamuni), including Hinayana and Mahayana, are revealed teachings; while the teachings delivered by the Dharmakaya (Mahavairocana) alone are unrevealed or hidden teachings (Shingon). In the two other writings--Hizohoyaku (The Jewel Key to the Store of Mysteries) and Himitsumandara-jujushinron (The Ten Stages of Spiritual Growth)--Kukai classifies all the religious teachings known to him in ten stages of spiritual growth. In his scale of spiritual growth, the first nine stages belong to exoteric (revealed) teaching and the tenth alone to esoteric (unrevealed) teaching. In one sense, all ten stages belong to esoterism, the first nine being considered lower or preparatory stages for the last. Kukai was a practical psychologist, and he described how a Shingon believer starts from the innocent (without self-consciousness) level, and passes through utilitarian and moral levels before reaching the transcendental level, which is the state of sokushin-jobutsu (becoming a buddha

in this body). His system of classification of religious systems is arbitrary and his sources are questionable. His main argument is that the essence of the self-enlightenment of Mahavairocana is the real form of the Tathagata and that Mahavairocana's merciful activities are manifested in all parts of the universe. Thus, if a being realizes his real nature, he becomes one with the essence of the Tathagata's enlightenment and enters the eternal spiritual life with the Tathagata. In his Sokushin-jobutsu-gi he develops this theme more elaborately.

Kobo-daishi's doctrines may be summarized as follows:

(1) Kobo-daishi radically transformed the historic Buddhist concept of Mahabhutas (great elements). Originally, Buddhism was based on the radical pluralism that existence is an interplay of a plurality of ultimate elements (dharmas) which alone are realities, and that every combination of dharmas is a mere name. Kobo-daishi, following Yogacara, stated that six Mahabhutas (great elements)--earth, water, fire, air, ether, knowledge--exist everywhere. Since he recognized the interpenetration of Mahavairocana and other beings, everything has the common Mahabhutas. Thus, even Dharmakaya (truth-body), which in historic Buddhism was understood as colorless and formless, has form, color, and sound. In developing this thesis, Kobo-daishi ascribed reality only to the whole. Buddhism, which started as redical pluralism, was interpreted by Kobo-daishi as radical monism.

(2) Kobo-daishi developed a thesis of sammitsu (three mysteries) by which a priest becomes an incarnation of Buddha. The three mysteries are acts of meditation, acts of recitation of

dharani (true word), and acts of mudra (hand-seal). He asserts that the three secrets of the body, speech, and thought of Buddha will remain mysterious if there is no means of communion. Such a communion comes from the enfolding power of Mahavairocana and not from the aspirant. But once this union is established, every act of adoration of the aspirant acquires the power of evoking the mysterious power of Mahavairocana. Such a state is called jobutsu or becoming buddha.

(3) In systematizing his theology, Kobo-daishi rejected the historic concept of kalpa (world-period) and interpreted kalpa as passionate attachment from which one must be emancipated in his spiritual growth.

(4) Kobo-daishi's most radical departure from historic Buddhism was his Buddhology. His contemporary, Dengyo-daishi, attempted to harmonize the Lotus sutra, taught by the historic Buddha Sakyamuni, and the Mahavairocana-sutra, taught by Buddha in Dharmakaya (Mahavairocana). But Kobo-daishi rejected Buddha Sakyamuni and only recognized Mahavairocana.

(5) Shingon Buddhism, formulated by Kobo-daishi and based on the Mahavairocana-sutra, teaches cosmotheism. (Original Budhism taught a co-creation of all beings--every one of us is self-created and self-creating.) The whole universe is the body of Dharmakaya Mahavairocana, and it may be divided into two complimentary constituents--the mental and the material or the ideal and the actual. Kobo-daishi asserted that the absolute is identical with the universe but the universe is not identical with the absolute.

(6) Kobo-daishi made full use of mandalas, dharanis, and rituals, in order to show that the ultimate reality can be known, not as an object of thought but finally in faith and communion. All the acts of worship are illustrated by what is beautiful--in color, form, rhythm, odor, style, or expression. The worship of Mahavairocana cannot be dissociated from the cult of beauty.

Following in the footsteps of his senior contemporary, Dengyo-daishi, Kobo-daishi also envisaged the establishment of a national religion. But unlike Dengyo-daishi, he ingratiated himself with the old established Buddhist schools and Shinto, because all of the them were on their way to salvation. Kobo-daishi's mission was to transform them from within. Thus, he freely performed initiation and ordination rites to priests and laymen of Shinto as well as Buddhist schools. Although he finally organized the Shingon sangha (church or brotherhood), his influence reached far beyond the denominational boundary. In fact, all the Buddhist schools, including the Tendai school, came under the strong influence of Shingon (Mantra) Buddhism during the Heian period. Also Kobo-daishi, whose Buddhology was not conditioned by the historic Buddha Sakyamuni, found it logical to identify the primordial native Shinto deity and Mahavairocana. Although a close relationship between Shinto and Buddhism had existed from the Nara period, it was Kobo-daishi who justified the pattern of coexistence of Shinto and Buddhism (Ryobu-Shinto) from the theological viewpoint. Shingon Buddhism, as formulated and propagated by Kobo-daishi, was peculiarly congenial to the ancient Japanese world-view.

Once the pattern of coexistence of Shinto and Buddhism was

established theologically and practically, it conditioned the subsequent development of religions in Japan, for Kobo-daishi's system of religion was synthetic in character, and in it were found different religious elements and approaches. From Kobo-daishi's synthesis, there developed several types of religious schools. First, the school which saw the ultimate reality in the "world to come," which Kobo-daishi did not take seriously but did not deny, articulated the belief in Sukhavati (pure land). Second, another school saw the ultimate reality in the cosmic wholeness--for example, the Shingon school held the concept of sokushin-jobutsu (becoming buddha in this body), and the Zen school held the concept of satori (experience of the undifferentiated state of the universe). Third, the ultimate reality was identified with the Shinto kami, which was elevated to the supreme position, in the reformed Shinto schools.

The following tentative conclusions may be drawn from this study: (1) In spite of external modifications of the ancient Japanese world-view, through the influence of alien religious schools, which we have discussed in this thesis, the fundamental character of this world-view as the "total aesthetic experience of the cosmic wholeness" remained constant. (2) Mantrayana or Mantra Buddhism, among the three main branches of Buddhism, was most congenial to the ancient Japanese world-view. To be sure, major Mahayana schools prospered in Japan after the ninth century, but they were greatly colored and conditioned by the Shingon (Mantra) school of Kobo-daishi. (3) The historic religious character of the Japanese culture nurtured Ryobu-Shinto or the coexist-

ence of Shinto and Buddhism, and Ryobu-Shinto conditioned the subsequent development of religions in Japan.

From the beginning
That which I sought
Lay in my hands.
How stupid I was
To have thought it an echo
Floating to me
From beyond.[1]

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[1]Beatrice Lane Suzuki, "Poems of Kobo-daishi," The Eastern Buddhist, V (1931), 313.

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